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Indic *śarīra* and Chinese *shèlì* in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* and *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*

Jonathan A. Silk

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Acknowledgments

This study has taken a number of years to come to fruition. It began originally as some brief notes inspired by Schopen 1991. After I returned to these notes several years ago, the study grew in unexpected directions, and to an unexpected length, taking on a thoroughly different character. I have had the opportunity to present versions of this revised and expanded work several times over the years, particularly in Japan. The audiences and colleagues at universities and institutes in Tokyo and Kyoto were kind enough to offer stimulating and helpful suggestions and corrections. I am grateful to them all.

In particular, for her suggestions of directions in which to rethink my evidence I am especially grateful to Jan Nattier. Her encouragement led me to thoroughly re-work this study. She also offered a number of valuable and useful suggestions on the antepenultimate draft. My appreciation is also due my colleague Gregory Schopen for his insightful comments and suggestions on an early draft. Thanks also to Seishi Karashima for a number of important corrections and suggestions. A further number of the same on the first draft I owe to the kindness and care of the indefatigable Shayne Clarke. Klaus Wille generously shared a few Sanskrit references with me. More recently, I owe a great debt indeed to my friend Stefano Zacchetti, whose detailed suggestions concerning the obscurities of early Buddhist Chinese I have gratefully accepted. His generous corrections throughout have improved the precision of my translations. Max Deeg was also kind enough also to offer several valuable suggestions, as was Peter Skilling. To others who have offered a variety of good advice and support, I apologize for not thanking all of you here personally.

Although I have consulted earlier translations when available, all translations, unless explicitly stated otherwise, are my own, including those of modern sources. Consequently, and obviously, while in much of what is correct here I have been guided by my predecessors and my contemporaries, all responsibility for any and all misunderstanding or misrepresentation rests with me alone.

It remains to thank Prof. Hara and the International Institute for Buddhist Studies for their willingness to publish this monograph, the basic contents of which I had the pleasure to present in the form of a lecture at the Institute in October 2004.

Technical Note

Although it would certainly have been preferable to have done so, I was not able to establish critical texts for many of the passages cited in the following. However, in so far as possible and practical, I have attempted to cite the best texts.

For Pāli, I have referred to the editions of the Pāli Text Society, but with reference also to the edition of the sixth (Burmese) council edition, published in devanāgarī by the Vipassana Research Institute.

For Chinese, I have in principle cited only the Taishō edition, although I am aware that it is sometimes far from perfect. I am responsible (or irresponsible) for the punctuation of the Chinese citations, although for the *Dīrghāgama* I have had the advantage of being able to consult the punctuated text in the recent and excellent *Gendaigoyaku Agonkyō Jōagonkyō*. I made use of electronic texts for searching, but always confirmed readings in printed editions.

For Sanskrit texts, I have attempted to verify manuscript readings whenever possible, although I have used as is the transcriptions of scholars such as Waldschmidt and Toda. Note that what I refer to as the Kashgar manuscript might more properly be called the Khādaliq manuscript; I refer to it, however, by the name under which it is usually cited.

*   *   *   *   *   *

* Just as the camera-ready copy of this monograph was completed, I learned of the existence of an old Italian translation of T. 5, *Fo banniehuan jing* 佛般泥洹經, by Carlo Puini, *Mahaparinirvana-Sutra, ovvero, Il libro della totale estinzione del Buddha nella redazione cinese di Pe-fa-tsu.* Cultura dell'anima 21 (Lanciano: R. Carabba, 1911). Apparently reprinted in 1919 and 1928, it was at least partly published earlier in *Giornale della Società Asiatica Italiana* 22 (1909). I have been unable to see this translation.

Contents

Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones
Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones
Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones
Don't you hear the word of the Lord?
(Traditional Negro Spiritual)[*]

Introduction

It is no exaggeration to say that the single most central spiritual and philosophical question in all Buddhist traditions is: What is a Buddha? And this is a question which is, in almost all cases, equivalent to the question: Who is our Buddha, Śākyamuni? Even discourses which seem to, and which on some level certainly do, address quite different questions may frequently be understood to also talk, on another level, about what we might, in a strict sense, call "Buddhology," the doctrine of Buddhahood.[1] Therefore, when we study Buddhist literature, we would do well to remain aware of levels of discourse other than those which appear on the surface. If Buddhist texts are, among other things, also often speaking about, or presupposing, some vision of the nature of Buddhahood, the only sure way to perceive that vision is to understand precisely what the texts are saying, on all levels. To say this is really to say nothing more than that all hermeneutics requires, first and foremost, a reliable philology. While, then, it is only when we begin to pay careful attention to what texts *say* that we begin to understand what they *mean*, we must remember that we are rarely, if ever, the first to have paid attention to classical Buddhist texts. And while those within the tradition who came before us naturally had

* There are a number of variant versions of this song, which is well known through its series of verses beginning "The toe bone connected to the foot bone," and so on.

1 For an example of apparently strictly economic discourse which is nevertheless also to be read as an exercise in Buddhology, see Silk 2002b.

agendas often radically different from our own, we can always learn from them. The records of earlier readers of Indian Buddhist scriptures, moreover, are not found only in self-consciously commentarial works.

Translations too function as a quite obvious form of commentary or exegesis: they restate a (perceived) meaning in other words, albeit also in a different language. This approach to translation as commentary can, naturally, have valuable implications for our understanding of the older literature of Indian Buddhism. It gives us another tool, in addition to the studies of grammar and lexicography, and the interpretations of indigenous commentaries, with which to approach what should be one of our central goals as historians, namely to gain an appreciation of the way(s) such literature was understood by the communities in which it was transmitted.[2]

Any attempt to make use of translations of ancient Indian Buddhist literature for comparative philological purposes, however, immediately encounters a set of serious problems, both theoretical and practical, the core of which is the following: we can never be sure either of the original linguistic form of any given scripture, or of the wording or even contents of the Vorlage from which a given translation was made.[3] Potentially even more seriously, we are fairly sure that in a great many cases even the earliest forms of Indic Buddhist texts we now possess, extant versions in Pāli and Gāndhārī, for instance, are themselves artifacts of some process of transformation from earlier, now lost, original sources in one or another Prakrit (whether these hypothetical originals were texts as such, or more amorphous entities), a process which continued in a more obvious and sometimes heavy-handed way with the subsequent recasting

[2] In this respect, we may entirely leave aside the vexed question of whether it is possible to understand what the text meant to its own authors. Regarding translation as exegesis, see for example the remarks of Tov 1992: 124ff. (and specifically regarding the Septuagint, Tov 1997). We must keep in mind, however, that despite the considerable value afforded by comparisons with Biblical materials, it is almost always clear that the Vorlage of translations of the Hebrew Bible was the Masoretic text as transmitted. In the case of Indian Buddhist materials translated in Chinese, for instance, the subject of the inquiries to follow, it is equally clear that the details of the Vorlagen in all cases remain and will remain unknown (and only slightly less so for translations into Tibetan). Furthermore, by reading early Chinese translations of Indic texts with an eye on what they may tell us about Indian Buddhism, I do not at all mean to imply that they cannot also be read as embedded in their Chinese context. They most certainly should also be so read: but this is a task for Sinologists, among whose number I do not by any means count myself.

[3] I leave aside here the possible, but if real rare, case in which we might have preserved in Tibet a specific Sanskrit manuscript from which we know a particular Tibetan translation to have been made. (However, see now Steinkellner 2004, which holds out the hope that we may indeed someday, in some cases, have direct access to the very Indic manuscripts from which some Tibetan translations were made.)

(or even wholesale rewriting) of texts in Sanskrit.[4] Therefore, strictly speaking, in many cases we will never have direct access to *any* "original" as such. Of course, this difficulty is of an entirely different type from that which confronts us when we attempt to make use of translations into Chinese (or Tibetan). The manipulations through which a text is put to make it fit Gāndhārī or even Sanskrit morphology, metrical patterns and so on probably rarely cross the threshold into "translation."[5] We may therefore accept, with due caution, extant Indic texts as "originals" in many cases, despite the result that there may then be important differences between variant but parallel versions of the same "original."[6] This resolution does not, however, address the separate problem raised by the fact that in the vast majority of cases we do not, and cannot, know the precise wording of the materials which served as the bases for Chinese (or even Tibetan) translations of Indic works. Specifically, and of greatest relevance for us at present, even as we grow closer to understanding the probable phonological and morphological shape of the materials which served as the underlying sources upon which some earlier Chinese translations of Buddhist scriptures were made, we remain locked in the position of being unable to specify word-for-word equivalences in a great many cases. That is, even assuming that we possess one or more extant Indic versions of a text translated into Chinese, as we attempt to utilize the latter to shed light on the interpretation of the former, as we attempt to employ translations as a variety of commentary, we remain and will remain incapable of determining whether a given Chinese rendering was intended by its translator to reflect his understanding of some particular term now found in our extant Indic texts, or whether perhaps the version he attempted and intended to render was worded somewhat or even considerably differently.[7] This will continue to be a problem even as our knowledge of this literature grows, and one that must have some impact on the ways in which we use translations as commentary in the sense

[4] Of course, I do not mean to imply that all Indian Buddhist scriptures were originally composed in Prakrit—only that some certainly were.

[5] This point is not, however, without considerable controversy, the resolution of which, even if possible, is fortunately irrelevant here. Even the very careful Norman 1993, for instance, alternately uses expressions of rather different import, including "translate," "transpose," "convert from one dialect to another," and "update [a text] because its language was growing archaic."

[6] The materials which form the *Dhammapada/Udānavarga* text corpus provide an excellent case in point.

[7] Things are not always this bad, and the case with systematic or philosophical works, in which the usage of technical vocabulary can be more rigidly defined, may present fewer, or less severe, problems of interpretation than we encounter in our efforts to come to grips with less systematic texts.

discussed above. From this perspective, the value of Chinese translations for interpretive readings of Indian texts can often be limited.

While this situation, then, disqualifies much Chinese evidence from a variety of applications, there are nevertheless cases in which it is possible to, as it were, sidestep this basic problem, because it is not the identification of a precise vocabulary which is in question, but rather the way in which an almost certainly firmly established vocabulary or concept is rendered and understood. In the following, I would like to explore one example of a case of this particular type.

Some years ago, Gregory Schopen took up the question of the meaning of an important phrase in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* which has, in various ways, influenced much of what has been said by modern scholars about Early Buddhism in India.[8] The phrase in question appears in a passage concerning the funeral of the Buddha, and the subsequent erection of a stūpa for his relics.[9] In the barest outline, Schopen's argument runs as follows: There is a fundamental typological difference between funerals and the relic or stūpa cult. The crucial passage in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* has been understood to restrict participation in *sarīra-pūjā* to the laity, forbidding monks to engage in this practice; because the key term *sarīra-pūjā* has been taken to refer to the relic cult, or stūpa worship, it is this from which monks are thought to have been barred. Schopen, however, raises the related questions of to what exactly the term *sarīra-pūjā* refers, and whose participation in this practice is intended to be restricted. In his opinion *sarīra-pūjā* does not, in this context, refer to the relic or stūpa cult, but rather to the funeral or cremation preparations and activities.[10] Moreover, he suggests that the restriction against participation in this practice is directed not to all monks, but very specifically to one particular monk, Ānanda.

In support of his suggestions, Schopen showed that the term *sarīra-pūjā* means, on the one hand, literally "worship of the body" (when *sarīra* is taken as grammatically singular), and on the other, relic worship (when *sarīra* is plural), and that the injunction addressed by the Buddha to his disciple Ānanda—that he should refrain from *sarīra-pūjā* of the Buddha after the latter's

8 Schopen 1991.

9 Unless otherwise specified, in the following I use the word "relic(s)" in the sense of post-cremational remains.

10 See also Schopen 1994: 37: "the evidence appears to be overwhelming that the term [*śarīra-pūjā*] originally—and for a long time—referred to the ritual handling or preparation of the body prior to cremation, though sometimes it seems also to include the latter." On the last point, see also p. 39.

death—refers only to the former, that is, to the process of preparation of the body for cremation: the funeral rites. He additionally supported this argument by further references to *śarīra-pūjā* in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya and several other texts.

I believe Schopen, who limited his investigations to a small number of texts preserved in Pāli and Sanskrit, strongly established this portion of his case. Moreover, he did so purely on the basis of Indian evidence in Indic language texts, a method which is both appropriate and necessary. I will *not* suggest in the following that we try to read or understand Indic texts through Chinese (or other) translations, here or elsewhere. In tandem with their commentarial function, however, Chinese materials may sometimes be able to shed light on Indian problems, mirror or reflect Indian understandings (or misunderstandings), or even have the capacity to help expose problems where they were not previously recognized.[11] In this regard, I would like to address several related issues. First, I would like to demonstrate that careful attention to Chinese sources should have pointed scholars long ago toward a proper understanding of the central passage in question from the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*,[12] an understanding conforming to Schopen's reading. Second—and in some sense conversely—I will consider the possible reasons why some Chinese sources, in particular the Chinese rendering of the *Dīrghāgama*, seem either to share in the perplexity over the meaning of *śarīra* evident in some modern interpretations of the term or, as I will argue, rather use vocabulary which, while specifically intentioned, could nevertheless have led readers into confusion.

The basic distinction Schopen refers to between grammatically singular and plural forms of *śarīra* (the Sanskrit equivalent of Pāli *sarīra*) is old; in the *Ṛg Veda śárīra* means body or frame—the rigid parts of the body—in the

11 The "trick" here, of course, lies in distinguishing between Chinese reflections of Indian understandings and Chinese (or Central Asian) understandings of Indian ideas.

12 I do not overlook the fact that more than one scholar appears to have understood the materials before him quite properly. When Waldschmidt (1944, 1948: 214), for example, who was thoroughly familiar with all the relevant sources, summarized the crucial passage quoted below on the basis of its Sanskrit and Pāli versions (Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 358, §36.2), he wrote: "Auf die Frage Ānandas, wie sie mit dem Körper des Buddha nach dem Parinirvāṇa verfahren sollten, antwortet der Buddha, die Mönche gehe das nichts an, das sei Laiensache." He says much the same in his general introduction to this section (1944, 1948: 210): "Auf die Frage Ānandas, was mit dem Leichnam zu geschehen habe, verfügt der Buddha, das gehe die Mönche nichts an; man möge diese Dinge den dafür sachverständigen Laien überlassen. Damit will der Buddha wohl zum Ausdruck bringen, daß die normalen Bestattungsgebräuche auf ihn Anwendung finden sollen. ... Auf Drängen Ānandas gibt der Buddha weiter an, die Leichenfeierlichkeiten habe man in der gleichen Weise wie bei einem Weltherrscher vorzunehmen." There can be little doubt here that Waldschmidt correctly understood the issue at hand to concern the disposition of the body.

singular, and bones in the plural.[13] Of course, in Classical Sanskrit *śarīra* can and does commonly occur in the plural in the sense of "bodies" as well, both human and animal.[14] The relation between body and bones is not problematic in theory. From the point of view of religious practice, however, as Schopen has emphasized, there is a significant difference between treatment of an intact dead body and treatment of the results of cremation—in ancient India most likely a sizable agglomeration of bones, since bodies were probably generally not burned at very high temperatures.[15]

While Schopen argued that the oldest interpretation of the Buddha's statement in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* must have referred only to a restriction on the participation in funeral or cremation preparations, he also suggested that by the time of the later books of the *Milindapañha*, this understanding had apparently been lost, or at least supplemented, since the text poses a dilemma which assumes that the expression *sarīra-pūjā* refers to relic worship. The implication then, as capsulized in the very title of Schopen's paper, is that the apparent misunderstanding is a very old one, going back at least to the fifth century C.E.[16]

I have no doubt that Schopen is entirely correct that many modern interpretations of the statement in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*, and even traditional ones such as that implied by the *Milindapañha*, are based on a misunderstanding of the original text. There has, however, long existed both significant evidence which supports the correctness of the understanding suggested by Schopen, as

13 Both forms appear for instance in the well known "funeral hymn," first in the singular as body, ṚV 10.16.1b: *mā́sya tvácaṁ cikṣipo mā́ śárīram*, and then in the plural as bones 3d: *óṣadhīṣu práti tiṣṭhā śárīraiḥ*. Schopen refers for this point to Norman 1983: 278.

14 See for example Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* (Kangle 1969): §1.20.20 and §2.2.14.

15 In addition, the results of cremation would have included large amounts of ash, for the most part from the wood or other fuel. Moreover, as we will note below, some accounts of the cremation of the Buddha explicitly mention that the funeral pyre is quenched, not allowed to burn itself out.

16 Schopen (1991: 108, 113 n. 29), following Demiéville, dates the relevant part of the text to the fifth century. Although it is clear that the *Milindapañha* more or less as we have it existed by that period, when it is cited by Buddhaghosa in his commentaries, it may well have been formed somewhat before that time, though after the composition of the earlier section set by von Hinüber (1996: 85; §179) between 100 B.C.E and 200 C.E. (Norman 1993: 150 says of the *Milindapañha* that "it must have been composed long enough before the time of Buddhaghosa for it to be regarded as authoritative.") Strictly speaking, however, since what Schopen says (1991: 108) is that "This dilemma ... allows us to see ... how the injunction was understood in Sri Lanka in about the fifth century C.E." we might understand him to mean that this is how the text of the *Milindapañha* was being read by those, such as Buddhaghosa perhaps, who utilized the text in this period. This seems to be, or should be, a different claim from the assertion that this is necessarily the period to which the text's compilation belongs.

well as some which might be understood to demonstrate that confusion over the meaning of the word *śarīra* or, as I will suggest, an appreciation of the ambiguity or multivalence of the term, is likewise not new. In the following, I would like to focus primarily on some Chinese materials relevant to this problem. This examination will fall into three main parts: I) An exploration of the way the central passage in question, narrating the events surrounding the Buddha's cremation, has been treated in Chinese translations; II) As an extension of the first part, an investigation of several unusual uses of vocabulary, most notably that of the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* and the closely related Dharmaguptaka Vinaya; III) Observations on some ways in which the terminology of *śarīra* has been treated and translated in Chinese, chiefly in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* and early Prajñāpāramitā literature.

I) The Body of the Buddha in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*

The account of the Buddha's funeral and the postmortem disposition of his body is taken up in a number of essentially parallel scriptural accounts.[17] We may begin by looking first at the Pāli text of the central passage concerning the disposition of the remains of the Buddha upon his death, that upon which Schopen focused his attention. The text first approaches the issue with a question:[18]

(1)

kathaṁ mayaṁ bhante tathāgatassa sarīre paṭipajjāmā[1] ti I

avyāvaṭā tumhe ānanda hotha tathāgatassa sarīrapūjāya I iṅgha tumhe ānanda sadatthe[2] ghaṭatha sadattham[3] anuyuñjatha sadatthe[2] appamattā ātāpino pahitattā viharatha I santānanda khattiyapaṇḍitā pi brāhmaṇapaṇḍitā pi gahapatipaṇḍitā pi tathāgate abhippasannā te tathāgatassa sarīrapūjaṁ karissanti ti I

kathaṁ pana bhante tathāgatassa sarīre paṭipajjitabban[1] ti I yathā kho ānanda rañño cakkavattissa sarīre paṭipajjanti[1] evaṁ tathāgatassa sarīre paṭipajjitabban[1] ti I kathaṁ pana bhante rañño cakkavattissa sarīre paṭipajjanti[1] ti I rañño ānanda cakkavattissa sarīraṁ ahatena vatthena veṭhenti I … etena upāyena[4] pañcahi yugasatehi rañño cakkavattissa sarīraṁ veṭhetvā ayasāya[5] teladoṇiyā pakkhipitvā … rañño cakkavattissa sarīraṁ jhāpenti I cātummahāpathe[6] rañño cakavattissa thūpaṁ karonti I evaṁ kho ānanda rañño cakkavattissa sarīre paṭipajjanti I

1) PTS paṭi° 2) VRI sāratthe 3) VRI *omits* sadattham 4) VRI etenupāyena 5) VRI āyasāya 6) VRI cātumahā°

[17] These include the Pāli *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* in the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1903), the Sanskrit *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, reconstructed from Central Asian fragments (Waldschmidt 1950-1951), extremely fragmentary remains of the sūtra in Gāndhārī (Salomon and Allon 2000), and the Tibetan translation of the *Kṣudrakavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya (cited in Waldschmidt 1950-1951), in addition to the Chinese versions we will study below. These sources (except the subsequently discovered Gāndhārī materials) have been considered in detail by Bareau 1970, 1971, although I confess I do not always find his method of presentation transparent. The detailed treatment of Waldschmidt 1944, 1948 is also of immense value, and considerably easier to use than Bareau's work. One should see also Bareau 1975 and 1979 and Sugimoto 1984: 297-318, 472-479, while keeping in mind that there is a large secondary literature on specific problems in this literature. The comparative table in Okayama et al., 1995: 651-667 is a very useful aid to sorting out the relationship of the various versions of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*. See too the tables in Hasegawa 1974: 25-29 and Tsukamoto 1969: 42-43.

[18] Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1903: 141.18-142.7 (§V.10-11) (in notes PTS) = Burmese Sixth Council edition (Dhammagiri-Pāli-Ganthamālā 2 [Dhammagiri, Igatpuri: Vipasanna Research Institute, 1993]): 107.1-13 (in notes VRI). The second portion §V.11 is repeated at §VI.17 (161.8-24), with the Mallas asking Ānanda the same question, and getting the same answer.

My translation, which takes cognizance of Schopen's conclusions, is here intended primarily to highlight the technical terms and their relations, and not necessarily to stand as a comprehensive interpretation of the passage as a whole:

"How, Reverend One, should we behave toward the Tathāgata's body?"

"You should be unconcerned, Ānanda, with the worship of the Tathāgata's body. Please, Ānanda, strive for the true goal,[19] be committed to the true goal, live being zealous, ardent, and resolute toward the true goal. There are wise warriors, Ānanda, wise brahmins, and wise householders with deep faith in the Tathāgata who will perform the worship of the Tathāgata's body."

"How, Reverend One, should they behave toward the Tathāgata's body?"

"As, Ānanda, they behave toward the body of a universal emperor, so should they behave toward the body of the Tathāgata."

"How, Reverend One, do they behave toward the body of a universal emperor?"

"Ānanda, they wrap the body of a universal emperor in new linen cloth. … Wrapping the body of the universal emperor in this fashion in five hundred successive layers, they place it in an iron oil-vat, … and they cremate the body, and they build a stūpa for the universal emperor at a great four-way intersection. So, Ānanda, do they behave toward the body of a universal emperor.

The key expression here, and the one from which so much has been drawn, is *avyāvaṭā tumhe ānanda hotha tathāgatassa sarīrapūjāya*, "You should be unconcerned, Ānanda, with the worship of the Tathāgata's body." It is this example of the term *sarīra-pūjā* that Schopen argued should be taken to refer not to relic worship, but rather to the funeral preparation, the word *sarīra*, though here in compound, to be understood in the singular as "body." We note, moreover, that precisely the same word, *sarīra*, is used here to designate

[19] Buddhaghosa in his commentary on the sutta here evidently takes *sadattha* as *sad-(sat-)attha*, commenting (*Sumaṅgala-Vilāsinī*, Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1886: II.583.21 = Burmese Sixth Council edition (Dhammagiri-Pāli-Ganthamālā 5 [Dhammagiri, Igatpuri: Vipasanna Research Institute, 1993]): §204, 156.22) *sadatthe ghaṭatā ti uttamatthe arahatte ghaṭetha*, "'strive for the true goal' means you should strive for the highest goal, arhatship." (As in the root text, VRI reads *sāratthe* here too, upon what basis I do not know.) However, as noted in Rhys Davids and Stede 1921-1925: 674b, elsewhere Buddhaghosa also understands *sadattha* as *sa-d-attha* = **sva-artha*, glossing it for instance with *sake atthe* in *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā* ad Dhp. 166. In that context this does appear to be correct, as supported by the parallels in *Udānavarga* 23.10 (*svakārtha°*), Patna *Dharmapada* 325 (*sadāttha°*) and Gāndhārī *Dhammapada* 263 (*svakatha°*). But in light of Buddhaghosa's commentary and my understanding of the general tenor of the passage, I have provisionally chosen to understand the term here as *sad-attha*, noting that its interpretation is also basically irrelevant to the main issues under discussion here. For a detailed examination of the term's traditional interpretations, see Tamura 2003 (who does not, however, mention the present passage or its commentary).

both the body of the universal emperor (*cakravartin*) and that of the Buddha. Schopen also drew attention, in support of his hypothesis, to a subsequent passage in the Pāli text of the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* in which he suggested that one can actually see the transition from singular to plural *sarīra*, and the resulting shift in meaning from "body" to "relics":[20]

(2)

atha kho āyasmā mahākassapo yena kusinārā makuṭabandhanaṁ[1] mallānaṁ cetiyaṁ yena bhagavato citako ten' upasaṁkami | ... tikkhattuṁ citakaṁ padakkhiṇaṁ katvā | pādato vivaritvā[2] bhagavato pāde sirasā vandi | ... vandite ca pan' āyasmatā mahākassapena tehi ca pañcahi bhikkhusatehi sayam eva bhagavato citako pajjali |

jhāyamānassa[3] pana bhagavato sarīrassa yaṁ ahosi chavī ti vā camman ti vā maṁsan ti vā nahārū ti vā lasikā ti vā tassa n' eva chārikā paññāyittha na masi | sarīrān' eva avasissiṁsu | ... daḍḍhe[4] kho pana bhagavato sarīre antalikkhā udakadhārā pātu bhavitvā bhagavato citakaṁ nibbāpesi | ... kosinārakā pi mallā sabbagandhodakena bhagavato citakaṁ nibbāpesuṁ | atha kho kosinārakā mallā bhagavato sarīrāni sattāhaṁ santhāgāre[5] ... naccehi gītehi vāditehi mālehi gandhehi sakkariṁsu garuṁ kariṁsu[6] mānesuṁ pūjesuṁ |

1) VRI *adds* nāma 2) VRI *omits* pādato vivaritvā 3) VRI *adds* kho 4) VRI *adds* ca 5) VRI sandhāgāre (*misprint*?) 6) PTS parikariṁsu

Then the Venerable Mahā-Kassapa went to the Makuṭabandhana in Kusinārā, to the Malla's shrine, where the Blessed One's pyre was. ... Thrice circumambulating the pyre, uncovering [the Blessed One's body] at the feet he reverenced the Blessed One's feet with his head.[21] ... As soon as [the Blessed One's feet] had been reverenced by the Venerable Mahā-Kassapa and the five hundred monks, the Blessed One's pyre caught fire of its own accord.

While the Blessed One's body was being burned, no cinder or ash of the outer skin, inner skin, flesh, tendons, or oil of the joints could be discerned. Only the relics remained. ... When the Blessed One's body had been consumed, cascades of water fell from the sky, extinguishing the Blessed One's pyre. ... The Mallas of Kusinārā extinguished the Blessed One's pyre with water fragrant with all sorts of

[20] Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1903: 163.24-164.23 (§VI.22-23) = Burmese Sixth Council edition (Dhammagiri-Pāli-Ganthamālā 2 [Dhammagiri, Igatpuri: Vipasanna Research Institute, 1993]): 122.24-123.14.

[21] Peter Skilling drew my attention to the ablative *pādato* here. I remain unsure of its exact sense. Two examples may be cited: at MN ii.124,6-7, *maṁ pādato karitvā* means "pointing their feet at me," while at Vin. i.302,7-8, *bhagavā sīsato aggahesi āyasmā ānando pādato uccāretvā mañcaka nipātesum* means "the Blessed One grasped him from/by the head, Venerable Ānanda from/by the feet; lifting him up, they placed him down on a bed." The syntax (including a citation of the second example) has been discussed by von Hinüber 1968 §194, under the classification "Der Ablativ der Richtung und des Ortes."

scents. Then for seven days the Mallas of Kusinārā kept the relics in their assembly hall ... worshipping, honoring, respecting, and venerating them with dances, songs, music, garlands, and perfumes.

As mentioned above, I believe that Schopen has fully established his case concerning the proper interpretation of *sarīra-pūjā* in these passages solely on the basis of the Indic evidence he adduced. However, it will be very interesting to note that this interpretation is also comprehensively and quite unambiguously supported by the Chinese translations of the sūtra.[22] We will review these in the chronological order of their translation. But before we begin, we must first make some effort to define the key terminology which will appear in these passages.

In addition to the term upon which we will focus our central attention, *shèlì* 舍利, two key terms are employed to express "body" in the passages in question, namely *shēn* 身 and *tǐ* 體.[23] We also find these compounded as *shēntǐ*.[24] As far as I can tell, while there may be some distinctions between *shēn* and *tǐ* in terms of precise referent, nuance or affect in some cases of Chinese usage in general, the terms are, from Han times on at least, frequently if not usually used virtually, and most often entirely, synonymously.

A clear example may be seen in a Han funeral inscription dated to 143 C.E., in which we find the expression *shēnmò ér xíngmíng, tǐwáng míngcún* 身歿而行明、體亡名存, "Although the *shēn* is no more, his acts are brilliant; although the *tǐ* has perished, his reputation persists."[25] This seems to be a case of nothing other than elegant variation. However, there do exist examples which suggest that at least in some periods, or for some authors, or in some special cases, some distinction between the two was intended. In the opening words of the *Xiaojing* 孝經, for instance, the *Classic of Filial Piety*, we find *shēntǐ fàfū* 身體髮膚,

[22] Other sources of variant potential relevance from a wider perspective are in principle not considered in the following. These include—but are not limited to—the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya (T. 1435 [XXIII] 445c-446b [*juan* 60]), and various Mahāyāna Nirvāṇa sūtras.

[23] We should note that common Chinese words for "corpse," *shī* 尸 and *shī* 屍, appear never to be used in reference to the dead body of the Buddha. While Sanskrit *śava* does appear in Buddhist texts, rendered *sǐshī* 死尸 and *sǐshī* 死屍, as far as I know it never does so in reference to the Buddha.

[24] The inversion of this compound, *tǐshēn*, does occur in Buddhist texts, although it is not common; it appears to be unknown to dictionaries (Morohashi, Luo). Such inversions are, however, rather common in early Buddhist Chinese (see Zürcher 1977: 180), and in Chinese of early periods generally (see Cheng 1992: 282ff.). For these references I am indebted to Stefano Zacchetti.

[25] Cited from Brown 2002: 217, whose translation I have modified slightly.

"*shēn* and *tǐ*, hair and skin [one receives from one's parents]." The sentence structure suggests some distinction here between *shēn* and *tǐ*, and indeed a later commentary specifies one: *shēn wèi gōng yě; tǐ wèi sìzhī yě* 身、謂躬也。體、謂四支也, "*shēn* means *gōng* [body—understood here as head and trunk]; *tǐ* means the four limbs."[26] Such a distinction, however, appears to be quite rare, if it is, in fact, anything other than an artifact of the commentary's need to differentiate terms which are, actually, in practice wholly synonymous.

Now, while it is certainly true that we must take into consideration the possibility that certain vocabulary choices can only be understood within the local context of the translators, detailed inquiry into the factors motivating such choices is plainly impossible, since we generally lack even the smallest shred of direct evidence of what sorts of discussions might have been going on within some particular translation group. All we have are the resulting translations themselves. On the other hand, we do have a good idea of what the main lines of philosophical disputations were within Chinese Buddhist communities, and between Buddhists, Confucians and Daoists, in the Early Medieval period, the time to which the translations of interest to us here belong. It is possible that this perspective might help us understand some vocabulary choices. For at least with respect to philosophical discussions of the nature of the body vis-à-vis the nature of the "soul," it is plain that the vocabulary employed in such philosophical contexts was often different from what we meet in the translations under consideration here. In Han and pre-Han philosophical sources, obviously non-Buddhist since pre-Buddhist, the physical body is most frequently denoted by *xíng* 形, in opposition to something which animates the physicality, a "soul," variously denoted by a great variety of terms beginning with *hún* 魂 and going on from there. Moreover, according to a detailed study of debates over the "soul" in Early Medieval China, "pre-Eastern Jin thinkers, in their attempt to refute the possibility of an immortal soul, tended to use terms for 'body' like *gurou* [骨肉] and *xingti* [形體] that unmistakably refer to perishable entities."[27] The same study goes on to suggest that "the terms for body and its counterpart [were] standardized as *xing* and *shen* [here *shén* 神 = spirit—JAS] in almost all the discussions of the body-*shen* problem since the time of Zhu Sengfu's [竺僧敷] essay," referring here to the *Shen wuxing lun* 神無形論 of the mid-fourth century.[28]

26 Quoted in Morohashi 1955-1960: 10.969d (38034.78). See Wang 2002: 1385 and 1698, s.v. *shēn* and *tǐ*, respectively, for further citations of the words as virtual synonyms, and as somehow slightly distinguished in meaning.

27 Lo 1991: 136.

28 Lo 1991: 136; on the monk Zhu Sengfu, see Zürcher 1959: 147.

Nevertheless, there are prominent exceptions to this pattern of usage. In the Chinese version of the *Milindapañha*, for instance, in a discussion one purpose of which is to distinguish the life principle (*jīva*) from the physical body, we do indeed encounter the term *shēn*, body, distinguished from *mìng* 命, life-force.[29] As another example, Kumārajīva's late fourth-century translation *Zhonglun* 中論, his rendering of the pivotal *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā* of Nāgārjuna with commentary, contains a discussion of the location of "spirit," *shén* 神, arguing that it cannot exist since, if it did, it would reside either inside or outside the body, *shēn* 身. If inside the body, the text goes on, the body would be indestructible and the spirit always within it.[30]

Such examples of similar usages in contemporary Chinese Buddhist literature could be multiplied. This leads us to the conclusion that, first of all, the terms *shēn* 身 and *tǐ* 體 either alone or in combination have the straightforward meaning of "body."[31] Secondly, it does not appear likely that these terms were intentionally selected by translators as equivalents of Indic *śarīra* due to their usage in, or absence from, any particular indigenous doctrinal or philosophical contexts accessible to us now. It is, nevertheless, still possible that the Buddhist translators felt that by limiting themselves to *shēn*, *tǐ* and a combination of these two terms, and avoiding vocabulary such as *xíng* 形, they would be able to distance their treatment of the Buddha's body from some of the complexities

29 T. 1670B (XXXII) 172b28 (*juan* 2). The corresponding Pāli text (Trenckner 1888: 54,19) however has only *abbhantare jīvo*, without explicit mention of body. See Demiéville 1925: 137. It is interesting to note that the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* in its ninth chapter contains a discussion which cites a conversation between Nāgasena and King Milinda (or, as the Sanskrit text calls him, Kaliṅgarāja) in which we find the following (Pradhan 1975: 469.15-16): *kiṁ nu sa jīvas tac charīram anyo jīvo 'nyac charīram iti*, and so on. In the earlier Chinese translation of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, that of Paramārtha, dating to 562-567, we find this rendered (T. 1559 [XXIX] 307a 22 [*juan* 22]) 命者爲即是身、爲命者異身異. Here again clearly *shēn* 身 is used for body in the philosophical context of debates over mind-body (or life-force-body) dualism. See for this interesting reference La Vallée Poussin 1923-1931: ix.263, Demiéville 1925: 64-65, with notes, and Skilling 1998, only the last of which was able to refer to the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* in Sanskrit.

30 T. 1564 (XXX) 13b25-27 (*juan* 2). Incidentally, a quick look at the text suggests that the word *tǐ* 體 is used in the *Zhonglun* in its most normal sense of something like "substance," but never as "body."

I note the existence in the Longmen inscriptions in the Guyang cave of the compound *shēnshén* 身神, evidently in the sense of transmigrating "soul/spirit" (see Tsukamoto 1969: 500). The usage requires further investigation.

31 On *shēn*, see the concise observations of Zacchetti 2004, n. 28. He reminds us, moreover, of the philosophical connection of *shēn* as a rendering of *ātman* with Chinese confusions over the basic meaning of the non-self (*anātman*) idea, since the latter was rendered, essentially until the time of Kumārajīva, with *fēishēn* 非身, "not-body."

of contemporary philosophical debates over the nature of body and "soul," some but not all of which employed distinctly different body language.[32]

Now let us turn to the Chinese translations parallel to the Pāli passage we cited above.

The *Banniehuan jing* 般泥洹經 is recorded in traditional scripture catalogues as an anonymous translation dating from the period between 317-420. However, it is very close to certain that it is in fact to be correctly attributed to Zhi Qian 支謙,[33] and therefore datable considerably earlier, to the period 220-252, making it the oldest of the texts we will compare here. In it we find the following:[34]

(3)

佛滅度後、當作何①葬。佛言、汝默。梵志居士自樂爲之。又問、梵志居士爲葬法當云何。 … 用新劫波錦纒②身體 … 而③闍維之、訖收* ④舍利於四衢道、立塔起廟、表刹懸繒、奉施華香。

* v.l. 歛.

After the Buddha's demise, how should one perform the funeral (*zàng*) ①? The Buddha said: "You be quiet! Brahmins and householders are glad to take care of it themselves." [Ānanda] again asked: "What is the procedure through which the brahmins and householders should perform the funeral?" … wrapping the body (*shēntǐ*) ② in new cotton cloth … and cremate (*shéwéi*) ③ it. When this is done, collect the relics (*shèlì*) ④, and set up a stūpa and erect a shrine at a crossroads, with bnners and canopies drape it in silk, and offer flowers and incense.

[32] Incidentally, even in non-Buddhist Indian contexts of such debates, one standard term for body was indeed *śarīra*. The polar distinction between *śarīra* and *ātman* is found at least as early as the *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* / *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* (XIV.7.2.3-4 [Weber 1855: 1088] / IV.4.2-3 [Limaye and Vadekar 1958: 247]; note that the Mādhyandina recension reads *puruṣa* for Kāṇva's *ātman* in 4.4.3). The polarity continues in philosophical literature, for instance *Nyāyasūtra* 3.1.4: *śarīradāhe pātakābhāvāt*, "[If the body were identical with the soul, *ātman*], when the body is burned, there would be no sins." In other words, the individual would then be released from sin with the cremation of the body, which is not the case.

[33] According to Ui 1962, a conclusion shared by Kanno 1997 and Nattier 2003: 241; 2004: 176-177. For a radically different view of the attribution of this and several other Nirvāṇa-sūtra translations, see Iwamatsu 1976b (also 1976a), who sees the work attributed to Bo Fazu as the translation of Zhi Qian, that of the unknown translator (here ascribed to Zhi Qian) as the work of Dharmarakṣa, and that ascribed to Faxian as the work of Guṇabhadra. Despite some lingering disagreement, I follow here the views of Ui, Kanno and Nattier, which among other things do not require wholesale reassignment of the attribution of other translations. Nevertheless, it remains possible that one or more of these translations has in fact been wrongly assigned. See also n. 46 on Faxian, below.

[34] T. 6 (I) 186c16-22 (*juan xia*); trans. Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 215.

Here the vocabulary simply distinguishes between the funeral's treatment of the body (denoted by the compound *shēntǐ* 身體) on the one hand, and the post-cremation resultant relics (*shèlì*) on the other. The question posed here concerns the funeral, *zàng* 葬, which makes it crystal clear that this translation fully accords with the interpretation Schopen offered for the Pāli text: how one should "treat the body" means how one should perform the funeral.

Our next source, the *Fo banniehuan jing* 佛般泥洹經, was translated roughly a half-century later by Bo Fazu 白法祖, between 290-306. In this translation our passage reads:[35]

(4)

佛滅度後、吾等①葬佛②身體法當云何。佛告阿難、汝默無憂。當有逝心理家共憂吾③身。阿難言、彼以何法憂④佛尊體。佛告阿難、葬法如飛行皇帝殯葬之法。佛復踰彼。阿難言、葬聖帝法云何。佛告阿難、葬法用錦髭以纒⑤身。…⑥蛇維訖畢、歛⑦舍利、於四交道起塔立刹。

After the Buddha's demise, what is the procedure through which we should perform the funeral (*zàng*) ① for the Buddha's body (*shēntǐ*) ②? The Buddha said to Ānanda: "You should be quiet; it does not concern [you]! Brahmins and householders together will take care of my body (*shēn*) ③." Ānanda said: "What is the procedure through which they will take care of the Buddha's honorable body (*fó-zūntǐ*) ④?" The Buddha said to Ānanda: "The procedure for the funeral (*zàng*) is as the procedure for the funeral (*bìnzàng* 殯葬) of a universal monarch.[36] But the Buddha surpasses him." Ānanda said: "What is the procedure for the funeral (*zàng*) of an emperor?" The Buddha said to Ānanda: "The procedure for the funeral is to wrap the body (*shēn*) ⑤ in silk tissue … After the cremation (*shéwéi*) ⑥ is over, collect the relics (*shèlì*) ⑦, and set up a stūpa at a crossroads."

Here again the vocabulary makes it clear that the funeral procedures concern the disposition of the uncremated body. The Mallas speak of the Buddha's *shēntǐ*. The Buddha himself refers to his *shēn*, the same word he uses in speaking of the body of the universal emperor (*cakravartin*), and finally Ānanda speaks of the Buddha's body as *fó-zūntǐ*. There does not appear to be any fundamental distinction implied here, although of course Ānanda's vocabulary is honorific.[37]

[35] T. 5 (I) 169a29-b8 (*juan xia*); trans. Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 214. Compare the similar treatment at 173a15-25 (*juan xia*).

[36] No content or rhythmical considerations would appear to affect the alternation between *zàng* and *bìnzàng*; this appears to be purely a case of elegant variation.

[37] The text may, however, be making a distinction between Ānanda's use of a plural first person pronoun "we" *wúděng* 吾等, and the Buddha's response which uses "you" *rǔ* 汝, without any plural marker. Of course, this in itself is far from conclusive. In Classical Chinese

The *Dīrghāgama* was translated by Buddhayaśas 佛陀耶舍[38] and others into Chinese in 413 as the *Chang Ahan jing* 長阿含經.[39] This text may be assigned virtually without doubt to the Dharmaguptaka school and, thanks to the careful researches of Seishi Karashima, we are now certain that it was translated from some form of Middle Indic.[40] Buddhayaśas's *Dīrghāgama* has its version of the passage quoted above as follows:[41]

(5)

時阿難即從座起、前、白佛言、佛滅度後、①葬法云何。佛告阿難、汝且默然。思汝所業。諸清信士自樂爲之。

時阿難復重三啓、佛滅度後、葬法云何。佛言、欲知葬法者、當如轉輪聖王。阿難又白、轉輪聖王葬法云何。佛告阿難、聖王葬法、先以香湯洗浴其②體、以新劫貝周遍纏③身、以五百張疊次如纏之。内④身金棺、灌以麻油畢、擧金棺置於第二大鐵槨中、栴檀香槨次重於外。積衆名香、厚衣其上、而⑤闍維之、訖收⑥舍利 。於四衢道起立⑦塔廟、 …

阿難、汝欲葬我、先以香湯洗浴 …

At that time, Ānanda got up from his seat, advanced and spoke to the Buddha, saying: "After the Buddha's demise, what is the procedure for performing his funeral (*zàng* 葬) ①?" The Buddha said to Ānanda: "You be quiet! Think about what you should do. The *upāsakas will be glad to take care of it themselves."[42]

At that time Ānanda repeated his request three times, saying "After the Buddha's demise, what is the procedure for performing his funeral?" The Buddha said: "If one wants to know how to perform the funeral, one should follow [the procedure] for a universal monarch." Ānanda again asked: "What is the procedure for performing the funeral of a universal monarch?" The Buddha said to Ānanda: "The procedure for the funeral of a universal monarch is first to wash his body (*tǐ* 體) ② with fragrant hot water, then to wrap his entire body (*shēn* 身) ③ in new cotton cloth, successively wrapping it in 500 layers. Placing the body (*shēn*) ④ inside a golden coffin, it is then sprinkled with sesame oil, and the golden coffin is lifted up and placed inside a second large iron exterior coffin. Fragrant sandal wood is then stacked up around the outside of the exterior coffin. One piles up all sorts of renowned perfumes, covering the top [of the coffin] completely, and then cremates (*shéwéi* 闍維) ⑤ it. When this is done, the relics (*shèlì* 舍利) ⑥ are recovered, and a *stūpa-temple ⑦ is set up at a crossroads.[43] …

"Ānanda, if you want to perform my funeral, first wash [me] with fragrant hot water [… and so on as before]."

in general plural markers are very frequently omitted, and despite their more common employment in Buddhist translations, their rate of omission there too is high. The absence of a plural marker, therefore, in no way allows us to necessarily assume that a singular is explicitly intended. On the other hand, the usage may very well be significant.

38 The second character is also written 馱.

39 See Bareau 1966. The identity of the translator and related problems are discussed below.

40 Karashima 1994 concluded that this language was not identical with Gāndhārī, on the basis of materials then available. Subsequent discoveries of Gāndhārī language materials, which among other things have enhanced our knowledge of its phonology, may cast the question in a new light. However, I do not know of any attempt so far to confront the evidence of the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* with the results of the most recent studies of the newly discovered Gāndhārī materials being painstakingly examined by Richard Salomon and his team at the University of Washington.

41 T. 1(2) (I) 20a22-b3, 4-9 (*juan* 5). This material has been translated before: Weller 1939, 1940: 434-435 (clxiii-clxv); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 214; Kamitsuka in Okayama et al. 1995: 280-282.

42 See also the nearly identical assertion in the reprise in verse, T. 1(2) (I) 20b15-16 (*juan* 5): 阿難汝且默 思惟汝所行 國內諸清信 自當樂爲之.

Just as in the other translators' versions, a clear distinction is made between "body" (*tǐ* or *shēn*) before the cremation, and relics (*shèlì*) after.[44]

Almost contemporaneous with the just cited *Dīrghāgama* translation is the final version of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* we will consider here,[45] the *Dabanniepan jing* 大般涅槃經, translated by Faxian 法顯 only a few years later, in 417.[46] The parallel passage there reads:[47]

(6)

爾時、阿難而白佛言、世尊、入於般涅槃後、①供養之法當云何耶。佛言、汝今不應逆憂此事。但自思惟。於我滅後、護持正法。以昔所聞、樂爲人說。所以者何。諸天自當②供養我身。又婆羅門及以諸王長者居士、此等自當供養

43 I cannot resist pointing out, for the benefit of those who may have an interest in the popular culture of a generation ago, that the resulting edifice might also aptly be termed a "Shèlì Temple."

44 However, interestingly, despite the passage's assertion that Ānanda should not concern himself with the funeral, when Ānanda insists that he wishes to be told of the procedures for the Buddha's funeral, the Buddha's response does seem to accept the possibility that Ānanda himself will carry out these rites: "Ānanda, if you want to perform my funeral …," 阿難、汝欲葬我, with the second person pronoun explicitly employed, evidently in the singular.

45 For a much later version, dating about three centuries afterwards, see Additional Note 1.

46 The date is according to the *Chu sanzang jiji* 出三藏記集 T. 2145 (LV) 11c26 (*juan* 2). What is in any event most important for us is that since Faxian returned from his famous travels only in 414, his translation cannot be earlier than that of the *Dīrghāgama*, completed in 413. On the attribution of this translation to Faxian, see the detailed discussion in Matsumoto 1927: 5-11.

47 T. 7 (I) 199c21-200a20 (*juan zhong*); trans. Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 215.

我身。阿難言、雖復天人自興供養、然我不知應依何法。佛言、阿難、供養我身依轉輪聖王。…用新淨綿及以細氎合纏其身。…又於城中作闍維處。…至闍維處、燒香散華、伎樂供養。繞彼香積、周迴七匝、然後以棺置香積上、而用香油、以澆灑之。然火之法從下而起。③闍維既竟、收④取舍利、内金瓶中、即於彼處而起兜婆。…恒應日日、燒香散華種種供養。阿難、當知供養轉輪聖王之法。其事如是。⑤闍維我身亦與王等、然起兜婆。…若有衆生懸繒幡蓋、燒香散華、及然燈燭、禮拜讚歎我兜婆者、此人長夜獲大福利。將來不久他人亦復起⑥大兜婆、⑦供養其身。…

At that time, Ānanda then said to the Buddha: "Blessed One, after you enter parinirvāṇa, what is the procedure for worshipping (*gòngyǎng*) ① [you]? The Buddha said: "You should not now concern yourself with these things. Only think that after my demise you should protect and uphold the True Teachings. Take pleasure in preaching to people what you heard long ago. Why? The gods themselves will worship my body (*shēn*) ②, and brahmins as well as kings, householders and laymen themselves will also worship my body."

Ānanda said: "Although gods and men will themselves perform the worship, I still do not know what procedure should be followed." The Buddha said: "Ānanda, worship my body following [the procedure for the funeral of] a universal monarch ... wrap the body (*shēn*) in new cloth of fine weave, [place it in a coffin, and so on]. ... Furthermore, inside the city prepare a cremation ground, ... going to the cremation ground, burn incense, scatter flowers and worship with music. Circumambulate that fragrant pyre seven times. Then place the coffin atop the fragrant pyre, and sprinkle it with fragrant oils. The procedure for lighting it is [to start] from the bottom. When the cremation (*shéwéi*) ③ is complete, collect and take the relics (*shèlì*) ④, place them in a golden vessel, and erect a stūpa on that spot. ...

[People] should constantly worship daily, burning incense, scattering flowers, and so on. Ānanda, you should know that this is the procedure for worshipping a universal monarch. Similarly, cremating my body (*shēn*) ⑤, as a king's, you then build a stūpa. ... If there are beings who raise banners and parasols, burn incense, scatter flowers, light lamps and reverence my stūpa with hymns of praise, these people will attain great benefit for a long time. In the future before long others too will erect (a) great stūpa(s) ⑥ and worship its body (their bodies) (*shēn*) ⑦.

The same pattern we saw above in the other translations is paralleled here: only after the cremation does "body" vocabulary, *shēn*, and worship of the body give way to "relics," *shèlì*. The common term *gòngyǎng*, usually a translation of *pūjā*, appears to be used in a very broad sense. The basic meaning of the term implies making offerings, but here that sense is plainly too narrow. However, exactly what it entails is not always clear.[48]

As is made abundantly plain by all of these Chinese passages, the translators of these texts certainly understood Ānanda's question to concern only the procedures of a funeral and for handling the corpse, without any reference to worship of relics or stūpas—just as Schopen suggested the Pāli text should be understood. As Schopen emphasized, however, a number of modern scholarly treatments seem to have obscured the crucial distinction between corpse and relics. What is somewhat surprising is that not only those who dealt with the (conceivably ambiguous) Indic evidence but even some of those who have paid attention to the virtually unequivocal Chinese evidence also share in this confusion. For instance, having catalogued the differences and similarities of all the versions we have just examined, which should have made it very clear that the Buddha's advice to Ānanda concerns only the funeral, André Bareau nevertheless went on to say:[49]

> Consequently, all of our sources are agreed on this two-fold point: the funeral procedures of the Buddha are the duty of the laity and not of the monks, who are not to concern themselves with them. ... The cult of the Buddha *and of his relics*, at least the external forms of this cult, should in the first place be reserved for devout lay followers.

Bareau's adventitious addition of "and of his relics" appears to reflect the influence of his own preconceptions, for despite quite accurately reading what the texts do say, he went on to attribute to them something else as well. Akira Hirakawa also noticed the Chinese sources, yet made virtually the same leap as did Bareau. He went on, moreover, to connect this result to a theory about the development of early Mahāyāna communities, building upon an assumption of separate monastic and lay involvements with stūpa worship. I have earlier suggested that this fundamental misunderstanding seriously undermines key aspects of Hirakawa's general theory.[50]

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48 In particular, at the very end of the passage, the actions due a stūpa are characterized as *gòngyǎng qí shēn* 供養其身, perhaps to be taken as "worship of its body," or "of their bodies," or again "make offerings to its body," and so on. To what the term "body," *shēn*, in this particular instance refers is not specified. Is it to the stūpa itself, or to the remains of the Buddha contained therein? The key ambiguity here hinges on the sense of *qí* 其, a pronoun, in contexts such as this generally possessive. The sense of the expression remains unresolved, and we are perhaps very fortunate that our larger argument does not stand or fall on the fine interpretation of this passage.

49 Bareau 1971: 37, with my added emphasis. On p. 36, after carefully registering the Chinese passages which, as he correctly notes, discuss the body, funeral and *pūjā* of the body, Bareau wrote: "Notons en passant que le mot sanskrit désignant ici le corps, le cadavre (*śarīra*), désignera aussi par la suite les restes corporels infimes retrouvés sur les lieux de la crémation, les reliques corporelles, ce qui pourra obscurcir parfois nos textes."

Other examples illustrate further the struggle between accepted interpretations and what texts actually say. In his translation of Waldschmidt's edition of the Sanskrit *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, Iwamoto Yutaka naturally dealt with passages in that text which mention *śarīra* and *śarīra-pūjā*. His renderings are instructive. In the crucial passage concerning the Buddha's advice to Ānanda that he not concern himself with *śarīra-pūjā*, Iwamoto rendered the compound with *shari no kuyō* 舍利の供養, "*śarīra*-worship," which is to say relic worship, as he did in several similar passages.[51] However, precisely the same Sanskrit term is elsewhere rendered *sōgi* 葬儀,[52] or *otomurai no gishiki* お葬いの儀式,[53] "funeral" and "funeral ritual," respectively. At the same time, even when it means "body" in the singular, *śarīra* alone is translated by Iwamoto both with *shari* 舍利, "relics," on the one hand,[54] and with *nakigara* 亡骸, "corpse," on the other.[55] When the discussion turns to the results of the cremation, Iwamoto returns to *shari*.[56] In this inconsistency Iwamoto is far from alone. In what seems to be the earliest Japanese translation of the Pāli *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*, that of Byōdō Tsūshō, for example, we find a very similar pattern. Ānanda's first question to the Buddha (at §V.10) is translated with *shari* as follows:[57] 世尊、我等は如來の舍利を如何に處理すべきや, "Blessed One, how should we take care of the Tathāgata's relics?" and this vocabulary continues (in §V.11) into the discussion of the funeral of the cakravartin: 而して、世尊、轉輪王の舍利は如何に處理すべきや, "Then, Blessed One, how should we take care of the universal emperor's relics?" But the answer suddenly switches from *shari* to *karada* (also

[50] Hirakawa 1954: 337, and 406 n. 4. For my criticism, see Silk 2002a, as well as the work of others cited therein.

[51] Iwamoto 1974: 115, 135, and 136, translating respectively Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 358 (§36.2-3), 410 (§46.4), and 412 (§47.2).

[52] Iwamoto 1974: 139, 140, translating respectively Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 418 (§47.22), 420 (§48.8). In the latter case Iwamoto translates *adya gate saptāhe vartate śarīre śarīrapūjā* as: 今日は既に七日経っていますので、葬儀が行われています。その葬儀のときに.... When exactly the same expression occurs later (Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 432 [§50.1]), however, Iwamoto (1974: 144) renders it: 七日経って、佛の亡骸を葬る儀式が行われた, introducing yet a slightly different vocabulary, replacing "perform the funeral rites" with "perform the rites for the funeral of the Buddha's corpse."

[53] Iwamoto 1974: 143, translating Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 428 (§49.19).

[54] Iwamoto 1974: 138, translating Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 416 (§47.12).

[55] Iwamoto 1974: 136, 139, 141, 142, and 143 translating respectively Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 412 (§47.4), 420 (§47.23), 424 (§49.1), 426 (§49.5), 428 (§49.15), and (§49.20).

[56] Iwamoto 1974: 144-145, translating Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 434 (§50.5-6).

[57] Byōdō 1935: 126-127, 153, 157-158. This treatment is also peculiar since Byōdō had the benefit of access not only to Chinese sources, but to Rhys Davids's quite correct English translation as well.

read *mukuro*) 軀, "body, corpse," and then immediately back again: 阿難よ、人々は轉輪王の軀を … 阿難よ、轉輪王の軀は是の如く處理するなり。阿難よ、轉輪王の舍利を處理するが如く、是の如く如來の舍利を處理すべきなり, "Ānanda, people ... the universal emperor's corpse; Ānanda, so should you take care of the universal emperor's corpse. Ānanda, as you take care of the universal emperor's relics, so should you take care of the Tathāgata's relics." In the reprise of §V.10 at §VI.17, which in the Pāli is precisely the same save for the addition of the vocative "Ānanda," the earlier *shari* has become *karada*: 世尊阿難よ、我等は如來の軀を如何に處理すべきや, "Blessed One Ānanda [*sic*], how should we take care of the Tathāgata's corpse?" Finally, in the transitional paragraphs §VI.23-24 where *sarīra* moves from singular to plural, we find quite logically first *karada*, body, and then *shari*, relics. There is probably no way to account for such inconsistency or even incoherence (which could be instanced in any number of other places as well), other than as an effect of the translators' preconceptions, although given these fluctuations from one sentence to the next, it is difficult to see what even the translators themselves imagined the texts might be trying to say.

II) The Buddha's Funeral in the *Dīrghāgama* and Dharmaguptaka Vinaya

The treatments of the passages of some modern scholars cited above (and others noted earlier by Schopen) are clearly inconsistent, if not at least in part incoherent. What, however, of ancient Chinese translations? We have already seen that the parallels in these texts (§§**3**, **4**, **5**, **6**) to the first Pāli passage we cited, (§**1**), are virtually unanimous in seeing references to the pre-cremation object of veneration as a body, *shēn*, *tǐ* or *shēntǐ*. But when we look a bit more broadly at the treatment of this theme in these translations, we do notice a few oddities. These center around one particular word, *shèlì* 舍利. We may examine the translations beginning with the oldest, focussing on the vocabulary employed in descriptions of the body of the Buddha. We should begin by looking at ordinary body language, that used of the Buddha outside the direct funeral context, and hence in reference to a living body.

In Zhi Qian's translation, that dating from the first half of the third century, we find the following account of the Buddha's self-description of his illness:[58]

(7)

是時佛身疾、擧軀皆痛。佛念、痛甚、而弟子皆不在。當須衆來、乃取泥洹。宜爲是疾、自力精進、以受不念衆想之定。

At that time, the Buddha was physically (*shēn* 身) ill, and his entire body (*qū* 軀) was in pain. The Buddha thought: "The pain is horrible. However, all my disciples are absent. I ought to wait for them to arrive, and only then pass into nirvāṇa. Because of this illness, I should be energetic in my own efforts,[59] absorbed in the meditative concentration in which one is not mindful of diversity (**nānātva-saṁjñā*)."[60]

Here two terms refer to the Buddha's body, *shēn* 身 and *qū* 軀.[61] In Bo Fazu's half-century later rendering we find the same episode as follows:[62]

[58] T. 6 (I) 180a12-15 (*juan shang*); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 91

[59] To fight this illness?

[60] I here follow Bareau 1970: 140.

[61] The term *qū* 軀 is again a perfectly ordinary word for "body." The *Shuowen* 說文, for instance, simply defines it as *tǐ* (see Wang 2002: 1386).

[62] T. 5 (I) 164c5-9 (*juan shang*); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 91, 93.

(8)

身皆大痛、欲般泥洹。佛自念、諸比丘皆去、我獨般泥洹、不事無教戒。阿難從一樹下起至佛所、問、佛聖體不和寧差不。佛言、未差大劇、欲般泥洹。

[The Buddha's] entire body (*shēn*) was in horrible pain, and he was about to enter parinirvāṇa. The Buddha thought to himself: "All the monks are gone. If I attain parinirvāṇa alone, I would not be devoting myself to those who are without the dharma and vinaya." Ānanda got up from where he had been sitting at the base of a tree, approached the Buddha and asked: "Has the Buddha's sainted body (*fó-shèngshēn*) not been feeling well? Have you recovered?" The Buddha replied: "I have not recovered; it is extremely bad. I am about to enter parinirvāṇa.

Ānanda begs him to delay his parinirvāṇa, and then after a bit of discussion the Buddha again says: "Now my body (*shēn*) is all in pain," 今我身皆痛, and then after the famous comparison of his body to an old cart whose solid strength is gone, he says: "My body (*shēntǐ*) is like this, with its solid strength gone," 我身體如、此無堅強.[63] Here body language consists of the terms *shēn*, the honorific *fó-shèngshēn*, and the compound *shēntǐ*. The translator speaks of the Buddha's *shēn*, Ānanda uses an honorific collocation, *fó-shèngshēn*, and the Buddha himself speaks of his *shēn* and *shēntǐ*.

At least somewhat influenced by Zhi Qian's earlier rendering is that in the *Dīrghāgama* translation, the last we will consider, since Faxian's slightly later translation does not contain this episode:[64]

(9)

於後夏安居中、佛身疾生、擧體皆痛。佛自念言、我今疾生、擧身痛甚。而諸弟子悉皆不在。若取涅槃、則非我宜。今當精勤、自力以留壽命。

Later, during the summer rain retreat, the Buddha became physically (*shēn* 身) ill, and his entire body (*tǐ* 體) was in pain. The Buddha thought to himself as follows: "Now I am become ill, my entire body (*shēn*) in horrible pain. However, my disciples are all absent. If I were to pass into nirvāṇa, this would not be right of me. Now I should be energetic, and maintain my life by my own efforts."

Here, we find the Buddha speaking of his own body as *shēn* and the narrator too calling it *shēn* and again *tǐ*, a treatment entirely consistent with that we find in the other translations. The references in this passage are of course, as

[63] T. 5 (I) 164c13, 15-16 (*juan shang*); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 93.

[64] T. 1 (1) (I) 15a17-20 (*juan* 2); Sueki in Okayama et al. 1995: 236; Weller 75 (lxxxviii); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 91:

we noted above, to the living body of the Buddha, which we thus see described variously as *shēn*, *tǐ*, *fó-shèngshēn*, *shēntǐ* and *qū*, words which in this context appear synonymous both in denotation and connotation. We do note, however, that Bo Fazu's text has Ānanda use the explicitly respectful appellation *fó-shèngshēn*.

Generally speaking, the same vocabulary is used in reference to the dead body of the Buddha, his corpse. However, there are cases in all three early translations of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* in which, instead of the vocabulary for "body," consisting of the words just listed, we find something unusual: the term *shèlì* 舍利, which generally designates "relics," is used instead in the sense of "uncremated dead body." These cases occur in the context of the discussion of the treatment of the Buddha's body by the Mallas. In this regard, for the contrast it provides us we may first of all refer as a baseline to the Pāli text, which is straightforward and reads as follows:[65]

(10)

atha kho kosinārakā mallā purise āṇāpesuṁ I tena hi bhaṇe kusinārāyaṁ gandhamālañ ca sabbañ ca tāḷāvacaraṁ sannipātethā ti I atha kho kosinārakā mallā ... yena upavattanaṁ ... yena bhagavato sarīraṁ ten' upasaṁkamiṁsu upasaṁkamitvā bhagavato sarīraṁ naccehi gītehi vāditehi mālehi gandhehi sakkarontā garukarontā[1] mānentā pūjentā...evaṁ taṁ divasaṁ[2] vītināmesuṁ I

atha kho kosinārakānaṁ mallānaṁ etad ahosi I ativikālo kho ajja bhagavato sarīraṁ jhāpetuṁ I sve dāni mayaṁ bhagavato sarīraṁ jhāpessāmā ti I atha kho kosinārakā mallā bhagavato sarīraṁ naccehi ... sakkarontā ... dutiyam pi divasaṁ vītināmesuṁ I ...

atha kho sattamaṁ divasaṁ kosinārakānaṁ mallānaṁ etad ahosi I mayaṁ bhagavato sarīraṁ naccehi ... sakkarontā ... I dakkhiṇena dakkhiṇaṁ nagarassa haritvā bāhirena bāhiraṁ dakkhiṇato nagarassa bhagavato sarīraṁ jhāpessāmā ti I

1) VRI garuṁ karontā 2) VRI ekadivasaṁ *for* evaṁ taṁ divasaṁ

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā ordered their servants, saying: "Gather perfumes, garlands, and all the musical instruments in Kusinārā!" Then the Mallas of Kusinārā ... went to where the Blessed One's body was ... in Upavattana. Arriving there, they spent the entire day in honoring, respecting, venerating and worshipping the Blessed One's body with dances, songs, music, garlands, and scents ....

Then it occurred to the Mallas of Kusinārā: "It's too late today to cremate the Blessed One's body. We will cremate the Blessed One's body tomorrow." And so they spent the second day..in honoring..the Blessed One's body with dances ....

[65] Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1903: 159.14-160.5 (§VI.13-14) = Burmese Sixth Council edition (Dhammagiri-Pāli-Ganthamālā 2 [Dhammagiri, Igatpuri: Vipasanna Research Institute, 1993]): 119.18-120.7.

Then on the seventh day it occurred to the Mallas of Kusinārā: "Honoring ... the Blessed One's body with dances ... let us carry it to the south, around the outside of the town, and cremate the Blessed One's body to the south of the town."

In this passage, all occurrences of the term used for the corpse of the Buddha, *sarīra*, are in the grammatical singular, and there is nothing particularly difficult to understand. Although obviously none of the corresponding Chinese versions is a translation of this Pāli sutta, and all three in fact belong to sectarian lineages other than the Theravāda (even if it is not clear precisely which these are in some cases), there can be little doubt of the identity of the key technical terms in the Chinese texts and the Pāli version. While, as we saw above, the Pāli text referred to the body of the universal emperor and that of the Buddha equally as *sarīra*, and while the Chinese translations refer to the dead body of the universal emperor with ordinary body language, when it comes to discussing the funeral of the Buddha, some variations of interest appear. The first example to which we may draw attention occurs in Zhi Qian's early translation:[66]

(11)

舉城中相會聚。奉持華香詣佛舍利。稽首作禮承事供養。共問阿難、葬法云何。答如教說、轉輪王法、佛當復勝。

They all gathered together throughout the city, and bringing flowers and perfumes came to the Buddha's *shèlì*. Bowing their heads, they made reverences, and presented their offerings in worship. Together they asked Ānanda: "What is the funeral (*zàng*) procedure?" He answered them as had been taught: "It is [as] the procedure for [the funeral of] a universal emperor. But the Buddha's should be even better."

As even this minimal context makes clear, the *shèlì* spoken of here by the narrator can refer only to the pre-cremation corpse of the Buddha; there as yet exist no post-cremational remains (relics) to which reverence might be paid. However, this vocabulary is not used consistently by Zhi Qian, nor can we even detect any pattern of certain speakers preferring, or certain contexts calling for, certain terms. As the text goes on, after the Mallas prepare a series of golden coffins:[67]

[66] T. 6 (I) 189a11-13 (*juan xia*), Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 272:

[67] T. 6 (I) 189a16-19 (*juan xia*); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 276

(12)

具新劫波錦五百氎。是時四面人衆周滿四百八十里中。皆齎伎樂華香、來詣雙樹。共擧<u>佛身</u>、置黄金床上。而以伎樂、禮事供養。

They prepared new cotton cloth and 500 finely woven cloths. At that time the people gathered from all around, from throughout the surrounding 480 *li* area. All of them brought musical instruments, flowers, perfumes, and came to the twin [śāla] trees. Together they took the <u>Buddha's body</u> (*fóshēn*) and placed it atop the golden platform, then honored and worshipped it with music.

Here the very same body referred to earlier by the narrator as *shèlì* is simply *fóshēn*, the body of the Buddha. After the corpse is taken out of the city and paraded by gods, however, we return to *shèlì*:[68]

(13)

餘無數天於虛空中散天雜華、而雨澤香。是時婆賢大臣與拘夷大臣議、欲以人樂讚紹天樂俱送<u>舍利</u>。

Innumerable other gods strewed many types of heavenly flowers from the sky, and rained down perfumes. Then the Grand Minister Poxian and the Grand Minister Juyi conferred. They wished for the musical praises performed by humans to join with the music of the gods to send off the <u>*shèlì*</u>.

This *shèlì* once again can point to nothing other than the uncremated corpse. After the bier is carried in one gate of the city and out another, it is taken to the place this text calls Outu 漚荼. Then the Mallas:[69]

(14)

持劫波錦纏<u>佛身體</u>。五百張氎、次纏千過。麻油澤膏滰滿金棺、已内<u>佛身</u>、擧黄金棺。… 漚蘇大臣執火而欲<u>燃佛</u>。積火至輒滅、三進不然。賢者阿那律語阿難言、火所以不然者、是諸天意。見大迦葉將五百衆、從波旬來。已在半道、欲面禮佛故、使火不燃耳。阿難言、諾、敬如天願。

Wrapped the <u>Buddha's body</u> (*fóshēntǐ*) in cotton cloth, and next wrapped it a thousand times in 500 finely woven cloths. They filled the golden coffin with sesame oil, and placed the <u>Buddha's body</u> (*fóshēn*) within the golden coffin. … The Grand Minister Ousu grasped a brand and was about to <u>cremate the Buddha</u> (*ránfó*), but the pyre was immediately extinguished. He tried three times, but it went out [each time]. The venerable Aniruddha spoke to Ānanda, saying: "That the fire does not ignite is due to the wish of the gods. They have seen Mahā-Kāśyapa coming from Pāpā[70] with his retinue of 500. He is still on the road, and since he wants to pay reverence to the Buddha, [the gods] do not permit the fire to ignite." Ānanda said: "Okay, we will respect the gods' wishes."

Here we find the body referred to once as *fóshēntǐ*, once as *fóshēn*, and once the text speaks simply of cremating the Buddha, *ránfó*, without explicit notice of the body. The scene then switches to Kāśyapa on the road, where he encounters an ascetic from whom he learns of the Buddha's death. The ascetic then informs him that "Gods and men gather together and worship his body (*shēn*)," 天人普會供養其身.[71] After some philosophical discussion on impermanence, Kāśyapa says "If we gather our robes and go quickly, we will be able to see the Buddha's body (*fóshēn*)," 攝衣疾行、可見佛身.[72] Eventually Kāśyapa:[73]

(15)

行到雙樹至覩佛積。謂阿難言、及未闍維、請見<u>佛身</u>。阿難對曰、<u>佛身</u>已纏、淹用麻油、藏在金棺。外積衆香匝滰澤膏。雖未闍維、固已難見。迦葉請至三。阿難答如初、以爲<u>佛身</u>難復得見。

Arrived at the twin [śāla] trees, and beheld the Buddha's funeral pyre. He asked Ānanda: "As long as it is yet uncremated, please show me the <u>Buddha's body</u> (*fóshēn*). Ānanda answered: "The <u>Buddha's body</u> (*fóshēn*) is already wrapped, soaked in sesame oil, and placed within the golden casket. Outside the pyre is built up thoroughly soaked with perfumes. Although it is as yet uncremated, it is very difficult indeed to see." Kāśyapa repeated his request thrice, and Ānanda answered [each time] as he had at first, that it is difficult to see the <u>Buddha's body</u> (*fóshēn*) again.

After the Buddha's feet emerge from the wrappings, Kāśyapa notices that they are discolored, and asks: "The [habitual] color of the Buddha's body

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68 T. 6 (I) 189b1-3 (*juan xia*); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 283-284.

69 T. 6 (I) 189b5-13 (*juan xia*); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 295-296.

70 The name of this city, alternatively Pāpā or Pāvā, is here (and elsewhere) transcribed *bōxún* 波旬, EMC pa-zwin. The second character may also be read *jūn*, which probably yields EMC kun or kwin, but neither of these transparently support the equivalence with *va/pa*. The problem was discussed in some detail by Pelliot 1933, who mentions *inter alia* the suggestion of the lexicographer Huilin that one should read not *xún* 旬 but rather *xuàn* 旬, EMC ɣwenʰ. Seishi Karashima, who reminded me of Pelliot's study, believes that Huilin is correct, but notes that further investigation is required.

71 T. 6 (I) 189b16 (*juan xia*); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 287.

72 T. 6 (I) 189b24 (*juan xia*); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 291.

73 T. 6 (I) 189b28-c3 (*juan xia*); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 302.

(*fóshēn*) is golden; why is it [now] different?" 佛身金色。是何故異.[74] Ānanda describes the episode of a pious old woman's tears, and then follow Kāśyapa's verse of lament. The last mention of the body of the Buddha in this text—afterwards we get mention of the cremation, and subsequently of the resultant bones, *fógǔ* 佛骨,[75] their distribution,[76] and so on—is of some interest. It comes in two verses spoken by Ānanda, the interpretation of which is very difficult, and the translation consequently unsure:[77]

(16)

佛以中外淨　爲梵世之身
本乘精神下　而今措於是
錦纏氎千過　不用衣著軀
亦不以浣濯　如一淨鮮明

The Buddha because he is pure inside and out comes to have a body (*shēn*) of the Brahma world. Originally he descended by means of his spirit, and now leaves it here.
Wrapped in cotton, in a thousand layers of finely woven cloth, there is no need to cloth [his] body (*qū*). Moreover, it is not washed clean, but it is pure and thoroughly bright.

Much of this is highly obscure, but seems nevertheless to point to a docetic view of the nature of the Buddha and his corporeal manifestation or incarnation in this world. If Przyluski is right—and at least Waldschmidt thinks he is—then these verses are nothing other than a "vigorous protest against the ancient traditions according to which the body of the Buddha was washed and clothed in garments. Such practices, which are suitable for a ordinary man and equally for a cakravartin, seemed useless and out of place in the time in which the Buddha had become completely divinized and no longer had any human appearance."[78] According to this view, Zhi Qian's text, or at the very least the version of Ānanda's verses preserved therein, sees the Buddha as not only transcendent but by nature supramundane. This does not appear, however, to be a view supported by depictions of the Buddha elsewhere in the same

[74] T. 6 (I) 189c5-6 (*juan xia*); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 302.

[75] T. 6 (I) 190a19 (*juan xia*).

[76] T. 6 (I) 190a24, 27-28 (*juan xia*): in the first case, the expression is *fógǔfēn* 佛骨分, in the second *shèlìfēn* 舍利分. Here clearly *gǔ* 骨, bones, is equivalent to *shèlì* 舍利, relics.

[77] T. 6 (I) 190a13-16 (*juan xia*), discussed in Przyluski 1918-1920: 17-18 (= 179-180), Bareau 1971: 258-259.

[78] Pryzluski 1918-1920: 17-18 (= 179-180), affirmed by Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 307.

translation, at least with regard to the specific vocabulary used in reference to his body, or for example in terms of the depiction of his physical illness, cited above, which presupposes a vulnerable and humanly physical Buddha. In addition, when the body of the Buddha is twice referred to in these verses, it is once with the word *shēn*, the second time with *qū*. The picture of the transcendent Buddha seen here by Przyluski, whatever may be its significance, does not appear to be related to, or to reflect, any specific or special vocabulary used in reference to his body.

To continue our survey, when we turn to Bo Fazu's translation, we find there "normal" references to the corpse of the Buddha designated with "body" language, as we saw earlier, but in addition the following passage which speaks of the procedures prior to cremation:[79]

(17)

逝心理家即曰。擧佛舍利床、欲從城西門入。床爲不擧。理家俱曰、床不動搖、從得出城乎。

The brahmins and householders then said: "Lifting up the platform of the Buddha's *shèlì*, we wish to enter from the city's western gate." But the platform could not be lifted. The householders together said: "It is not possible to move the platform. Can we take it out of the city?"

Nowhere else in this translation does the word *shèlì* refer to the body of the Buddha, meaning elsewhere always "relics." In addition, as far as I can see nowhere in the last of our sources, Faxian's translation, is *shèlì* used in anything other than the sense of "relics." This leaves us with one source yet to consider, the *Dīrghāgama* translation. And here we find the most complex set of examples of *shèlì* vocabulary used to refer to the body of the Buddha. What patterns, if any, direct the employment of the term is the key question we will try to address, and the central source of the perplexity which motivated the present study to begin with.

The first passage in the *Dīrghāgama* to attract our attention reads as follows:[80]

(18)

時諸末羅各相謂言、宜各還歸、辦諸香花及衆樂、速詣雙樹、①供養舍利。竟一日已、以②佛舍利置於牀上。使末羅童子擧牀四角、擎持幡蓋、燒香散華、

[79] T. 5 (I) 173b14-16 (*juan xia*); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 276.

[80] T. 1(2) (I) 27c17-23 (*juan* 4). This material has been translated by Weller 1939, 1940: 191 (cccviii); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 272; Bareau 1985: 277; Hikita in Okayama et al. 1995: 345.

伎樂供養。入東城門 … 而③闍維之。

At that time the Mallas discussed among themselves as follows: "Let each one go back to his home, prepare perfumes, flowers and musical instruments, and quickly go to the twin trees to worship the *shèlì* ①. After one day, putting the Buddha's *shèlì* ② on a platform,[81] let the Malla youths take the four corners of the platform, hold aloft banners and parasols, burn incense, scatter flowers and play music in worship. Entering through the eastern gate ... and then cremate ③ it."

This sequence begins with an employment of *shèlì* in what can be nothing else than the sense of "body, dead body, corpse" ①②, something which exists before the cremation ③ has yet been carried out. The reference here is to the body of the Buddha, and the speakers are the Mallas. The text goes on to say that the Mallas then did return to their homes, gather the requisites for worship and, going to the twin śāla trees, between which rested the body of the Buddha, "did worship of/to the *shèlì*," *gòngyǎng shèlì* 供養舍利.[82] After a day they placed the *shèlì* on a platform, and so on. Aniruddha warns them that they are wasting effort, since the gods are about to come and lift up the platform themselves. When the Mallas ask why, Aniruddha replies:[83]

(19)

汝等欲以香花伎樂供養①舍利。竟一日已、以②佛舍利置於床上、 … 而③闍維之。而諸天意欲留④舍利、七日之中、香花伎樂、禮敬供養。然後以⑤佛舍利置於床上、 … 而⑥闍維之。

You are about to take perfumes, flowers and musical instruments to worship the *shèlì* ①. After one day [you plan to] put the Buddha's *shèlì* ② on a platform ... and cremate ③ it. But the gods wish to keep the *shèlì* ④ [in place], and for seven days reverently worship it with perfumes, flowers and musical instruments. Later they will take the Buddha's *shèlì* ⑤, put it on a platform ... and cremate ⑥ it.

Here Aniruddha speaks, using *shèlì* to refer to the corpse of the Buddha. The Mallas then agree and resolve that they will beautify the city, and for seven days worship the *shèlì* (*gòngyǎng shèlì* 供養舍利),[84] the same vocabulary being used both to report their direct speech and to report their activities

[81] Contextually, perhaps better "bier," although the term *chuáng* 牀 in itself has no such connotation.

[82] T. 1(2) (I) 27c24-25 (*juan* 4).

[83] T. 1(2) (I) 27c29-28a10 (*juan* 4).

[84] T. 1(2) (I) 28a13 (*juan* 4).

narratively. The narrator then goes on to describe how the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three (Trāyastriṁśa) scatter various kinds of flowers over the *shèlì* and play heavenly music while the spirits sing songs. To this the Mallas say: "Let's leave aside our human music for the moment, and request divine music for the worship of the *shèlì* (*gòngyǎng shèlì* 供養舍利)."[85] The narrator goes on to say how they worship the *shèlì* with golden flowers as big as wagon wheels. Shortly thereafter, the text continues:[86]

(20)

時諸末羅設供養已、 … 告阿難曰、我等當復以何供養。阿難報曰、我親從佛聞、親受佛教。欲①葬*舍利者、當如轉輪聖王葬法。又問阿難、轉輪聖王葬法云何。答曰、聖王葬法、先以香湯洗浴其②身、以新劫貝周遍纏③身、五百張疊次如纏之、内④身金棺、 … 而⑤闍維之、收拾**⑥舍利、於四衢道起立⑦塔廟、 …

* v.l. 瘞 ** v.l. 斂.

At that time, after the Mallas had worshipped ... they asked Ānanda: "How should we worship now?" Ānanda answered: "I have heard [about this] directly from the Buddha, and received the Buddha's direct instructions. One who wants to perform the funeral of the *shèlì* (*zàng shèlì*) ① should follow the procedure for the funeral of a universal monarch."

Again they asked Ānanda: "What is the procedure for the funeral of a universal monarch?" He answered: "The procedure for the funeral of a monarch is to first bathe his body (*shēn*) ② in fragrant hot water, then wrap the body ③ in new cotton, successively binding it in 500 layers. The body ④ is placed in a golden coffin ... and it is cremated ⑤, the relics (*shèlì*) ⑥ collected, and a *stūpa-shrine ⑦ erected at a crossroads. ...

Here once again the Mallas are speaking when they mention in reference to the Buddha "funeral of the *shèlì*" ①,[87] where *shèlì* can have no other meaning than "body, corpse." But when the topic turns to the universal emperor, the

[85] T. 1(2) (I) 28a22-23 (*juan* 4). As Hikita points out in Okayama et al. 1995: 636, n. 60, this is very close to the expression we find in Waldschmidt's Sanskrit text (1950-1951: §47.22): *pr(atik)ṣ(ipāmo) vayaṁ manuṣyakāni vadyāni divy(ai)r v(ādy)air (bha)gavataḥ śarīrapūjāṁ kariṣyāmaḥ*. I thus disagree with Bareau 1971: 208, who sees the humans and gods playing together. On the term *qiězhì* 且置, which corresponds here to *prati√kṣip*, see Sueki's note in Okayama et al. 1997: 231, n. 74.

[86] T. 1(2) (I) 28a28-b8 (*juan* 4); trans. in Weller 1939, 1940: 193-194 (cccxviii-cccxix); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 285; Hikita in Okayama et al. 1995: 349-350.

[87] The variant reading of the three editions, Song, Yuan, Ming, *yì* 瘞 for *zàng* 葬, could be translated "wants to bury the *shèlì*." I think this is not right, although it is sensible.

vocabulary shifts to *shēn* ②③④. We may begin to speculate whether, in this text at least, this usage of *shèlì* is a honorific one, with ordinary words for "body" avoided out of respect for the Buddha. The first instances in this sequence refer to the body of the Buddha, which might motivate the use of special vocabulary. Those which follow, however, refer to the less exalted cakravartin, with regard to whom it is said that his body (*shēn* 身) is washed. For the cakravartin, only after his cremation ⑤ do we encounter the term *shèlì*, clearly now in the sense of relics ⑥. We might then wonder whether an intentional distinction has been introduced, namely between a less exalted mere "body," *shēn*, and the Buddha's body as *shèlì*. This hypothesis might, in the first place, be strengthened by the immediately following paragraph, in which the Buddha is made to use "body" language in reference to his own (future) corpse:[88]

(21)
阿難、汝欲 ①葬我、先以香湯洗浴、用新劫貝、周匝纏②身、以五百張疊次如纏之。内③身金棺、… 而④闍維之、收撿 ⑤舍利、於四衢道起立 ⑥塔廟 ….

"[The Buddha told me:] 'Ānanda, if you want to perform my funeral ①, first wash [me] with hot fragrant water, then wrap the body (*shēn*) ② in new cotton, and bind it successively in 500 layers. Place the body ③ in a golden coffin, … and cremate ④ it, collect the relics (*shèlì*) ⑤ and erect a ⑥ stūpa at a crossroads. …'"

The word *shèlì* appears in this passage in Ānanda's words reporting the direct speech of the Buddha, but it is used only to refer to post-cremation remains, relics ⑤. When the Buddha speaks of his own dead body, he calls it *shēn* ②③. This is consistent with the speculation of a differential use of respect vocabulary, since we might well imagine the Buddha depicted as avoiding honorific language with respect to himself. However, we find a discussion which appears to contradict this neat dichotomy slightly later in the same narrative sequence:[89]

(22)
末羅又問、諸天何故使火不燃。阿那律言、天以大迦葉將五百弟子從波婆國來、今在半道、及①未闍維、欲見②佛身。天知其意、故火不燃 ….

[88] T. 1(2) (I) 28b10-15 (*juan* 4); trans. in Weller 1939, 1940: 194 (cccxx); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 285; Hikita in Okayama et al. 1995: 350.

[89] T. 1(2) (I) 28b28-c2 (*juan* 4); trans. in Weller 1939, 1940: 195 (cccxxiv); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 295; Hikita in Okayama et al. 1995: 351.

The Mallas again asked: "Why do the gods not permit the fire to burn?" Aniruddha replied: "The gods consider that Mahā-Kāśyapa is presently coming from the land of Pāvā with 500 disciples, and that he is now [just] midway; he wants to see the body of the Buddha (*fóshēn*) ② while it has not yet been cremated ①. Because the gods know his intention, they do not permit the fire to burn. …"

Here the Buddha's disciple Aniruddha refers to the uncremated ① object not with the hypothesized respect term *shèlì*, but rather as the Buddha's body (*fóshēn*) ②. While we may have no trouble with the Buddha using non-respect vocabulary about himself, we now have to consider whether we might maintain both that *shèlì* functions in this text as an honorific usage contrasting with unmarked *shēn*, and also that the Buddha's disciple might speak of his corpse using the less exalted term *shēn*. There are, however, other examples of such usage. After Kāśyapa learns that the Buddha is dead, he and his five hundred disciples are saddened, and lament his passing. The famous disrespectful disciple, here called *Upananda,[90] rejoices at the Buddha's death and the consequent freedom he imagines it implies for the disciples, and Kāśyapa laments to his followers:[91]

(23)
速嚴衣鉢、時詣雙樹、及未闍維、可得見佛。時諸比丘聞大迦葉語已、即從座起、侍從迦葉、詣拘尸城、… 至阿難所、問訊已、一面住、語阿難言、我等欲一面覲①舍利。及②未闍維、寧可見不。阿難答言、雖③未闍維、難復可見。所以然者、④佛身既洗以香湯、纏以劫貝、五百張疊次如纏之、藏於金棺、… 以爲⑤佛身難復可覩。迦葉請至三、阿難答如初、以爲⑥佛身難復得見。時大迦葉廻向香積。於時⑦佛身從重槨内雙出兩足。足有異色。迦葉見已、怪問阿難。⑧佛身金色。是何故異。

Let us quickly pack up our robes and bowls, and go to the twin [śāla] trees, where we will be able to see the still uncremated Buddha.

At that time, the monks heard what Mahā-Kāśyapa said, and getting up from their seats they escorted Kāśyapa and went to Kuśinagara … to where Ānanda was, greeted him, stood to one side, and said to Ānanda: "We want just one look at the *shèlì* ①. Cannot we have a look while it is still uncremated ②?"

Ānanda replied: "Although it is not yet cremated ③, it is still difficult to see again. The reason is, the Buddha's body (*fóshēn*) ④ was already washed with fragrant hot water, bound with cotton, bound successively in 500 layers, installed

[90] See Bareau 1971: 223 for the varieties of ideas about the identity of this figure.

[91] T. 1(2) (I) 28c17-29a1 (*juan* 4); trans. in Weller 1939, 1940: 196-197 (cccxxviii-cccxxix); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 301; Hikita in Okayama et al. 1995: 353-354.

within a golden coffin ... so it is difficult to view the Buddha's body ⑤ again."

Kāśyapa repeated his request thrice, and Ānanda answered [each time] as he had at first , that it is difficult to see the Buddha's body ⑥ again.

Then Mahā-Kāśyapa turned toward the pyre of fragrant firewood, and at that time the Buddha's body ⑦ had pushed out both two feet from within the many layers of encoffining. And the feet were a different color [from their usual gold].

Kāśyapa saw this, and asked Ānanda questioningly: "The [habitual] color of the Buddha's body ⑧ is golden; why is it [now] different?"

Here when the monks speak they wish to see the uncremated ② *shèlì* ①, but when Ānanda speaks he refers to the condition of the Buddha's equally uncremated ③ body (*fóshēn*) ④⑤, the two terms *shèlì* and *fóshēn* apparently being used synonymously yet differentially, according to speaker. This differentiation might yet support the hypothesis, since in the case of *shèlì*, ordinary monks are speaking, while in the case of *fóshēn* it is the Buddha's intimate Ānanda who speaks. As the text again goes on, Kāśyapa learns that the discoloration is due to the actions of a pious old woman, and:[92]

(24)

迦葉聞已、又大不悅。即向香薪、①禮佛舍利。時四部衆及上諸天同時俱禮。於是佛足忽然不現。 …

時彼佛積不燒自燃。諸末羅等各相謂言、今火猛熾、焰盛難止。②闍維舍利、或能消盡。當於何所求水滅之。時佛積側有娑羅樹神、篤信佛道。尋以神力滅佛積火。時諸末羅復相謂言、此拘尸城左右十二由旬所有香花、盡當採取③供佛舍利。尋詣城側、取諸香花、以用供養。時波婆國末羅民衆聞佛於雙樹滅度、皆自念言、今我宜往求④舍利分、自於本土起塔供養。

When Kāśyapa heard that he was very sad and, immediately turning toward the pyre of fragrant firewood, did reverence to the Buddha's *shèlì* ①. At that time the four groups [of monks, nuns, male and female lay followers] and the gods above did reverence at the same time, and the Buddha's feet [which had been visible] disappeared from sight straight away. ...[93]

At that time [after Kāśyapa finished his reverence], the Buddha's pyre burst into flame spontaneously without anyone igniting it. Then the Mallas discussed among themselves: "Now the fire is burning fiercely, the blaze difficult to suppress. When the *shèlì* is cremated ②, we may be able to extinguish [the fire]. Where shall we look for water to quench [the fire]?" At that time, the god of the śāla

[92] T. 1(2) (I) 29a2-4; a25-b5 (*juan* 4); trans. in Weller 1939, 1940: 197 (cccxxxii), 200-201 (cccxxxiv-cccxxxv); Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 310; Hikita in Okayama et al. 1995: 355; 357-358.

[93] I omit here Kāśyapa's verses of lament.

trees which were beside the Buddha's pyre had profound faith in the Buddha's Way, and with his divine power he immediately quenched the fire of the Buddha's pyre.

Then the Mallas once again discussed among themselves: "Within twelve yojanas of this town of Kuśinagara there are fragrant flowers. Let us bring all of them and worship the Buddha's *shèlì* ③."

They went beside the city walls, and worshipped using perfumes and flowers they had brought. Then the Mallas from the kingdom of Pāpā heard that the Buddha had died at the twin [śāla] trees, and they all thought: "I should go there now and try to get a share of the *shèlì* ④, take it to my homeland, erect a stūpa and worship it."

Here both the narrative voice and the speech of the Mallas use the term *shèlì* to refer to the dead body of the Buddha. However, the uncremated body is called *shèlì* ①, it is this *shèlì* which is cremated ②, and what remains after the cremation fires are extinguished is likewise termed *shèlì* ③④.

I suggested that in the case of the translation of Zhi Qian we could see no particular pattern to his use of *shèlì* to refer to the uncremated corpse of the Buddha, which he uses in this sense only twice. And of course, although Bo Fazu does use the word in this way, he does so only once, so there is no pattern possible. But the *Dīrghāgama* translation employs the word *shèlì* in the sense of "body" repeatedly, and this allows the possibility for detection of a pattern, if one exists. We may plot the uses of the relevant terminology according to speaker and to referent as shown in the accompanying table (see overleaf).

The only significant difference evident here seems to be that the Mallas never speak of the Buddha's corpse as *fóshēn*, and Kāśyapa never speaks of it as *shèlì*. Both Aniruddha, the arhat, and Ānanda, the still unawakened disciple, use both terms. The first question we must ask is what significance this distribution might have. Second, and from quite another point of view, we must consider how a reader could understand this *shèlì* which is taken, prepared, burned, and then recovered from the funeral pyre, precisely the same word in this sequence indicating both states of the object, first unburned and then burned. The context and overall narrative flow may indeed make it clear on a case-by-case basis that sometimes the word *shèlì* must refer to a corpse that is to be initially prepared and burned, while subsequently it appears in the sense of "post-cremational relics." But is this really clearly understandable, or on the contrary, might it give an impression not unlike that one might gain by reading modern translations of the *Mahāparnirvāṇa-sūtra* which, as we have seen above, fluctuate in their treatment of the term *śarīra* in such a way as to render coherent comprehension of the text almost an impossibility?

	Mallas	Narrator	Aniruddha	Ānanda	Monks	Kāśyapa	Buddha
Buddha's *shèlì* as corpse	18 ①②, 19-bis, 24 ②	19-bis, 24 ①	19 ①② ④⑤	20 ①	23 ①		
Buddha's *shèlì* as relics	24 ③④						21 ⑤
Buddha's corpse as *fóshēn*		23 ⑦	22 ②	23 ④⑤ ⑥		23⑧	
Cakravartin's corpse as *tǐ*, *shēn*				20 ②③ ④			5 ②③
Cakravartin's *shèlì* as relics				20 ⑥			5 ⑥
Buddha's corpse as *shēn*							21 ②③

Let us turn to a basic question: why is the unburned corpse called *shèlì*? Can it be maintained that a distinction in levels of respect is intended between body and *shèlì*, with *shèlì* employed as an honorific equivalent for body, otherwise designated "ordinarily" *shēn*, *fóshēn*, *tǐ*, *shēntǐ* or the like?[94] In order to try to answer this question, we will first want to explore whether we find other, comparable uses of the same vocabulary elsewhere in the works of the translators whose renderings we have looked at above.[95]

We should perhaps not be entirely surprised to find little complementary evidence in the translations of Zhi Qian and Bo Fozu, given the rarity of the word *shèlì* in the sense of "dead body" even in their *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* translations. As far as I can see, the word *shèlì* appears rather rarely in the works of Zhi Qian,[96] and outside the passages noted above (§§**11**, **13**), never in

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94 Previous modern students of the text have not always seemed to notice any lexical distinction at all, much less attempted to explain it. Weller, for instance, in his generally extremely careful German translation consistently renders *shèlì* simply by "Śarīra," either "restoring" the transcription into Sanskrit or treating Śarīra as a German word. He renders *shēn* 身 consistently by "Leib" (once "Körper," perhaps by inadvertence). But he nowhere makes any attempt to explain what this "Śarīra" might be doing in the Chinese text, or what it might mean. Waldschmidt, who sometimes translates rather closely and sometimes paraphrases, freely alternates between "Leichnam" and "Körper" as equivalents of *shèlì*, once again never noting the fluctuation of the vocabulary. (Max Deeg points out that Leib has a Christian connotation, while Körper and Leichnam refer to concrete things, body and corpse.)

Bareau (1971: 182, 194, 214 , 1985: 277ff. and so on) likewise made no special notice of the vocabulary, interpreting the word contextually everywhere as "corps." Finally, the generally excellent and heavily annotated Japanese translation of Okayama et al. retains *shari* 舎利 in Japanese, adding a note at the first relevant instance (Hikita in Okayama et al. 1995: 631, n. 38) indicating that it means "corpse," *itai* 遺体, rather than relics. The necessity for the note itself indicates that something is not right here, but no further observations are offered.

This is, incidentally, an example of one disappointing feature of this generally superb modern Japanese translation of the *Dīrghāgama*, namely the occasional retention of Chinese terms in and as Japanese, even when this is not entirely appropriate. Since as far as I know there is no way that *shari* can mean "corpse" in Japanese (on some senses of *shari* in Japanese, including rare ones, see Yuyama 1995: 386), in this respect the translation here is wrong, despite the note. (Another oddity of this translation is the periodic use in the Japanese of honorifics nowhere even implied in the Chinese, as for example when *fóshēn* 佛身 is translated [e.g., p. 351, 354] with *butsu no osugata* 仏のお姿.)

95 Ideally one should systematically study all Chinese Buddhist translations of the same period, but since as a practical matter such a survey is beyond my abilities at present, I restrict this investigation to the works attributed to the translators to whom are ascribed the early *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtras*.

96 I accept as the corpus of his translations those works identified by Nattier 2003: 241-242, namely: T. 6, 54, 68, 76, 87, 169, 185, 198, 210, 225, 281, 328, 361, 474, 493, 532, 533, 556, 557, 559, 581, 632, 708, 735, 790, 1011, and maybe 20, 27, 507, and 511. I searched this and other works cited here electronically, rather than reading through them in their entirety, as

the sense of "body." However, one perhaps closely related usage does draw our attention. In a passage in Zhi Qian's translation of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, for which of course we have an extant Sanskrit text, we find the following:[97]

(25)
佛言、不用是身舍利得佛也。乃從一切智生得佛身。我滅度後、舍利供養如故。

The Buddha said: "One does not become a Buddha through this *shēn-shèlì*; one obtains a Buddha-body (*fóshēn*) from omniscience. After my death my relics (*shèlì*) are still to be worshipped.

To this roughly corresponds the following in the published Sanskrit text:[98]

(26)
bhagavān āha | tasmāt tarhi kauśika nānenātmabhāvaśarīrapratilambhena tathāgatas tathāgata iti saṁkhyāṁ gacchati || sarvajñatāyāṁ tu pratilabdhāyāṁ tathāgatas tathāgata iti saṁkhyāṁ gacchati | … evaṁ ca mama parinirvṛtasyāpi sata eṣāṁ śarīrāṇāṁ pūjā bhaviṣyati ||

The Blessed One said: "Therefore, Kauśika, it is not by means of obtaining this physical body (*ātmabhāva-śarīra*) that one is called 'Tathāgata.'[99] Rather, when one has obtained omniscience one is called 'Tathāgata.'" … And after I am dead too these relics of mine will be worshipped.

The Indian commentator Haribhadra interprets the Sanskrit compound *ātmabhāva-śarīra* here appositionally: *ātmabhāvaśarīram ity ātmabhāva eva śarīram.*[100] If we accept that Haribhadra's gloss and Zhi Qian's translation, *shēn-shèlì* 身舍利, are attempting to convey the same sense, then *shēn-shèlì* likewise should also be understood appositionally, as "body (*shēn*) = *śarīra* (*shèlì*)," or in other words, "*shèlì*, that is to say, 'body.'" Even if this is correct,

would certainly have been preferable.

97 T. 225 (VIII) 484a17-18 (*juan* 2).

98 Wogihara 1932-1935: 210: 10-12, 17-18, 211.6-7 (Mitra 58), and see below n. 102.

99 It would be possible to translate "… that a Tathāgata is called Tathāgata" and so on. However, I understand the expression in line with phrases such as that in *Kāśyapaparivarta* §121 (Staël-Holstein 1926): *śramaṇa śramaṇa iti kāśyapa ucyate | kiyan nu tāvat kāśyapa śramaṇa śramaṇa ity ucyate*, or a frequent refrain in the *Vajracchedikā*, for instance (Schopen 1989: 103): *kṣetravyūhāḥ kṣetravyūhā iti subhūte avyūhās te tathāgatena bhāṣitās tenocyante kṣetravyūhā iti.*

100 Wogihara 1932-1935: 210.13-14.

however, the fact that what we understand to be the appositional compound *ātmabhāva-śarīra* was translated *verbatim et literatum*, with *ātmabhāva* rendered as *shēn* and *śarīra* as *shèlì*, may conceivably, but need not necessarily, in its turn suggest, perhaps paradoxically, that Zhi Qian did not imagine *shèlì* on its own to be capable of conveying the requisite meaning of "body" as such. It may also suggest that cases in which ordinary body language is used are to be understood as in some way consequently unmarked, and without particular importance. A probably more realistic way of looking at the question, however, is to see *shēn-shèlì* as a mechanical effort to render the two elements of the compound *ātmabhāva-śarīra*, an element-by-element calque, without consideration for questions of the ease with which the result might be understood by those with access only to the Chinese text.[101] The translation, then, is not interpretive so much as "literal," although it may simultaneously indicate Zhi Qian's appreciation that *ātmabhāva-śarīra* here signifies something more than a mere "body." I will argue that such an appreciation may hold the key to understanding other "bodily" uses of *shèlì* vocabulary.

A very important point, however, is that in whatever way Zhi Qian may have understood the terminology he employed here, he did not create it. In fact, as is true for the bulk of his translation of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, his "translation" has more the nature of a revision of the earlier translation of Lokakṣema, dating to 179 C.E., than that of an independent work. And in Lokakṣema's translation we find the passage in question as follows:[102]

(27)
佛語釋提桓因。不用身舍利、從薩芸若中得佛。怛薩阿竭爲出般若波羅蜜中。如是拘翼。薩芸若身從般若波羅蜜中出。怛薩阿竭阿羅呵三耶三佛薩芸若身。薩芸若身生我作佛身。從薩芸若得作佛身。從薩芸若生我般泥洹後舍利。供養如故。

101 The large-scale study of Zhi Qian's translations now being carried out by Jan Nattier will no doubt help us better understand how he treated Sanskrit compounds, and thus suggest how best to understand this particular instance.

102 T. 224 (VIII) 432a15-20 (*juan* 2). Actually, the portion quoted here corresponds to the Sanskrit text that extends onto Wogihara 1932-1935: 211.7, as follows: *yeyam kauśika sarvajñatā tathāgatasyārhataḥ samyaksambuddhasya prajñāpāramitānirjātaiṣā | eṣa ca kauśika tathāgatasyātmabhāvaśarīrapratilambhaḥ prajñāpāramitopāyakauśalyanirjātaḥ san sarvajñajñānāśrayabhūto bhavati | enaṁ hy āśrayaṁ sarvajñajñānasya prabhāvanā bhavati buddhaśarīraprabhāvanā bhavati dharmaśarīraprabhāvanā bhavati saṁghaśarīraprabhāvanā bhavati || ity evaṁ sarvajñajñānahetuko 'yam ātmabhāvaśarīrapratilambhaḥ sarvajñajñānāśrayabhūtatvāt sarvasattvānāṁ caityabhūto vandanīyaḥ satkaraṇīyo gurukaraṇīyo māmanīyaḥ pūjanīyo 'rchanīyo 'pacāyanīyaḥ saṁvṛtto bhavati || evaṁ ca mama parinirvṛtasyāpi sata eṣāṁ śarīrāṇāṁ pūjā bhaviṣyati ||*

The Buddha spoke to Śakra Devānām Indra: "It is not through the *shēn-shèlì*, but rather from **sarvajña[tā]* (omniscience), that one becomes a Buddha. The Tathāgata emerges from within Prajñāpāramitā (the Perfection of Wisdom). Just so, Kauśika, the body of **sarvajña[tā]* emerges from within Prajñāpāramitā. The Tathāgata, Arhat, Samyaksambuddha has a **sarvajña[tā]* body. When that **sarvajña[tā]* body is born, I create a buddha-body (*fóshēn*). I am able to create a buddha-body from **sarvajña[tā]*. After my parinirvāṇa, my relics (*shèlì*) will be worshipped.

In light of this evidence, it is clear that Zhi Qian's use of the compound *shēn-shèlì* is not original, but an adoption of an already existing rendering. What remains true, however, is that, whoever initially coined it, this usage may be relevant to other similar expressions in other translations.

As we noted a moment ago, the translations of Zhi Qian and Bo Fazu other than their *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* efforts provide no good complementary examples of clear usages of *shèlì* in the sense of corpse. But this is not so for the other translations attributed to Buddhayaśas, to whom is credited the *Dīrghāgama*. In fact, we find what appears to be precisely the same usage in that translator's rendering of the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, *Sifen lü* 四分律. This accord may, however, seem both less coincidental and simultaneously potentially less significant when we recall not only that both the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* and the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya belong to the same Dharmaguptaka sect, but that the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* itself is at heart a piece of Vinaya, and thus not only the episode but the genres of the two texts in which it appears are closely parallel, if not essentially identical.[103] In the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, then, we find the following treatment of the events surrounding the Buddha's death:[104]

(28)
爾時、世尊在拘尸城末羅園林娑羅林間般涅槃。諸末羅子洗①佛舍利已、以淨劫貝裹。復持五百張疊次而纏之、作鐵棺盛滿香油、安②舍利置中、以蓋覆上。復作木槨、安鐵棺著中積衆香薪。時末羅子中爲標首者、持③火然之。時天滅火。…

At that time, the Blessed One attained parinirvāṇa in Kuśinagara in the Malla grove, between the śālā trees. The Mallas washed the Buddha's *shèlì* ①, and

[103] On broader correspondences between the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* and Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, of which there are many, see Bareau 1966.

[104] T. 1428 (XXII) 966a19-24 (*juan* 54); trans. in Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 296. In his rendering of this text too Waldschmidt alternates between "Leichman" and "Körper" as renderings of *shèlì*.

wrapped it in clean cotton. They again bound it in 500 layers, made an iron coffin, filled it with fragrant oil, placed the *shèlì* ② within, and covered it with a lid. They made an outer coffin of wood, placed the iron coffin within, piling up fragrant firewood around it. Then the designated head of the Mallas lit it with a fire ③, and very quickly the gods extinguished the fire.

Here the narrator, speaking of the Buddha as seen by the Mallas, employs *shèlì* in the sense of the Buddha's corpse. The text continues saying that others try to light the fire, and again the gods immediately extinguish the flames. The Mallas ask why, and Aniruddha answers:[105]

(29)
摩訶迦葉在波婆拘尸城兩國中間、在道行、與大比丘衆五百人俱。彼作是念、我當得見①未燒佛舍利不耶。諸天知迦葉心如是念、以是故滅火。

"Mahā-Kāśyapa is travelling on the road between the two lands of Pāvā and Kuśinagara, together with a group of 500 great monks. He thinks: 'Will I be able to see the as yet unburnt *shèlì* of the Buddha ① or not?' The gods knew what Kāśyapa was thinking, and so they quenched the flames."

Here Aniruddha is speaking, reporting the thoughts of another disciple, the great Mahā-Kāśyapa, again using *shèlì* in the sense of the Buddha's corpse. We note that the vocabulary attributed to Mahā-Kāśyapa's thoughts is not the unmarked "body" vocabulary used by Aniruddha and Ānanda in the *Dīrghāgama*, but the hypothesized respect term *shèlì*. As the text goes on, Kāśyapa hears that the Buddha has died, and makes his way to Kuśinagar. He tells his disciples:[106]

(30)
且起、疾捉衣鉢、時往及①世尊舍利未燒、當得見。諸比丘聞迦葉言、即疾疾執持衣鉢。… 至阿難所、語言、阿難、我欲及②世尊舍利未燒見之。阿難答言、欲及③世尊舍利未燒、而欲見之。難可得見。何以故。④世尊舍利已洗浴、裹以新劫貝 … 置在鉄棺 … 是故難可得見。時大迦葉漸前往⑤佛舍利積所 …

"If we get up, quickly take robes and bowls ~~and promptly go~~ toward the Blessed One's *shèlì* ~~while it~~ is still unburned ①, we will be able to view it." The monks heard what Mahā-Kāśyapa said, quickly took their robes and bowls, …. They

[105] T. 1428 (XXII) 966a28-b2 (*juan* 54); trans. in Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 296-297.

[106] T. 1428 (XXII) 966b22-c4 (*juan* 54); trans. in Waldschmidt 1944, 1948: 303-304, and see Bareau 1971: 242.

came to where Ānanda was, and said: "Ānanda, we want to go to view the Blessed One's *shèlì* while it is still unburned ②." Ānanda replied: "You want to go to the Blessed One's *shèlì* while it is still unburned ③, and you want to view it. It is extemely difficult to view. Why? The Blessed One's *shèlì* ④ is already washed, wrapped in new cotton ... placed in an iron coffin .... This is why it is difficult to view."

At that time, Mahā-Kāśyapa gradually approached the pyre of the Buddha's *shèlì* ⑤ ....

Here Mahā-Kāśyapa, his disciples, Ānanda and the narrator all use *shèlì* in reference to the Buddha's corpse. Then Mahā-Kāśyapa sees the Buddha's feet, hears the explanation of their condition, the story of the weeping woman and so on, chants his verses of lament (which are not quoted), circumamblates the pyre, and the narrator concludes:[107]

(31)

火不燒自然。時大迦葉①燒舍利已、 … 集比丘僧 …

The fire spontaneously ignited without being lit. At that time, after Mahā-Kāśyapa had burned the *shèlì* ①, ... he gathered the community of monks ....

Although other versions of this episode, including that of the *Dīrghāgama*, go on to mention the relics resulting from the cremation, their distribution and so on, this Vinaya text moves directly to a different topic. In these passages, then, *shèlì* refers exclusively to the body of the Buddha, his corpse, without any parallel instance of its employment in the sense of "relics." However, it is worthwhile noting that in the only other use of the word *shèlì* in the entire Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, it equally obviously does mean "relics."[108] In addition, we should reiterate that in this text's presentation of the episode not only is *shèlì* used to designate the corpse of the Buddha, but it is the only word which is so used; "ordinary" body vocabulary is entirely absent. Therefore, even Kāśyapa here refers to the Buddha's corpse as *shèlì*, something he does not do in the *Dīrghāgama*. These two facts no doubt present significant problems for any hypothesis of an intentional differential deployment of body language, with *shèlì* being used as an honorific term for the uncremated body of the Buddha by certain individuals, while others refer to the very same body as *shēn* (or with comparably unmarked terms). Since the *Dīrghāgama* and the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya are both attributed to the same translator, and moreover contain

[107] T. 1428 (XXII) 966c11-12 (*juan* 54).

[108] T. 1428 (XXII) 957a8 (*juan* 52), referring to the installation of relics in a stūpa.

precisely the same episode, very similarly presented, it is difficult to argue that a particularly intentioned usage of vocabulary is to be found in only one of this pair of texts, but not deployed in the almost identical presentation in the other.

Now, we have spoken of both the *Dīrghāgama* and the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya as translations attributed to the same individual, the translator Buddhayaśas. But with this we encounter a problem. For although tradition tells us that he is responsible for these translations, it is questionable exactly what role Buddhayaśas himself may have played in the execution of the translations attributed to him. In fact, we may even be permitted, if not compelled, to question whether he knew much Chinese language at all.[109] The hagiographies and the Preface to the *Dīrghāgama* translation agree in attributing "Buddhayaśa's" translation of both that text and of the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya to the bilingual Chinese native Zhu Fonian 竺佛念, with the Chinese disciples Daoshi 道士 and Daohan 道含 acting as scribes.[110] The Preface goes on to mention the careful correction the *Dīrghāgama* translation underwent, especially with regard to the simplicity of its language.

If we attribute responsibility for the actual translation of the *Dīrghāgama* and Dharmaguptaka Vinaya mainly or significantly to Zhu Fonian, rather than focussing our attention on Buddhayaśas we might more profitably investigate the way *śarīra* terminology is dealt with in other translations attributed to Fonian.[111] The interpretation of these potential parallels is, however, made significantly more difficult by the fact that the genre of the texts available for comparison is entirely different. While the *Dīrghāgama* and Dharmaguptaka Vinaya passages we have studied belong, as we noted, to fundamentally similar genres, it being quite clear that the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* is at heart a piece of Vinaya, originating as a portion of the nascent hagiography of the Buddha which belongs to the Vinaya literature, the other examples of Fonian's translations in which relevant vocabulary appears all come from Mahāyāna sūtras.

[109] It is most likely that he did not; see Additional Note 2.

[110] The evidence of various catalogues and prefaces is actually somewhat complicated, and occasionally confused. It has been discussed several times in the literature, for instance by Tokiwa 1938: 878-882, and 838-845; Hirakawa 1970: 131-134; and Okayama et al. 1995: 16-19. See also Shih 1968: 90 and Okayama et al. 1995: 105, with nn. 54-62 on 380-384, translating T. 2059 (L) 334b (*juan* 2) and T. 1 (I) 1ab, respectively. The Preface to the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya translation (T. 1428 [XXII] 567b3-4) actually attributes its translation and correction proper to Huibian 慧辯, but modern authorities (Tokiwa, Hirakawa) consider this to be an error. Certainly the almost identical handling of the passages under investigation here argues strongly for the identity of the respective translators of the *Dīrghāgama* and Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, at least with regard to this episode. The question, however, requires careful reconsideration from a more global perspective.

[111] For studies of this figure see Unebe 1970, Okayama 1984, and Kamata 1990: 95-124.

Despite the genre difference, however, it is indeed a fortunate coincidence that we do find a number of passages in translations attributed to Fonian in which the circumstances of the Buddha's parinirvāṇa, his death, are dealt with. Before we notice those passages, however, we should note an example precisely parallel to—in fact, virtually the same as—one we already studied in our considerations of the translations of Zhi Qian and Lokakṣema above. For Fonian (along with *Dharmapriya, Tanmopi 曇摩蜱), like Zhi Qian, also translated the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* into Chinese, and "his" translation, in fact, is even closer to that of Lokakṣema than is Zhi Qian's. It is thus no surprise that in Fonian's version too the Sanskrit term *ātmabhāva-śarīra* is rendered with *shēn-shèlì*:[112]

(32)
佛語釋提桓因。不用<u>身舍利</u>故、爲從薩芸若得佛。怛薩阿竭者、爲從般若波羅蜜出。如是拘翼。薩芸若身者、爲從般若波羅蜜出。怛薩阿竭阿羅訶三耶三菩、爲從薩芸若生。我得作<u>佛身</u>。我般泥洹已後、<u>舍利</u>亦得供養。

The Buddha spoke to Śakra Devānām Indra: "Because it is not through the <u>*shēn-shèlì*</u>, one becomes a Buddha from **sarvajña*[*tā*] (omniscience). The Tathāgata emerges from Prajñāpāramitā (the Perfection of Wisdom). Just so, Kauśika, the body of **sarvajña*[*tā*] emerges from Prajñāpāramitā. The Tathāgata, Arhat, Samyaksambuddha is born from **sarvajña*[*tā*]. I obtained a <u>buddha-body</u> (*fóshēn*). After my parinirvāṇa, my <u>relics</u> (*shèlì*) will be worshipped.

It is very plain that Zhu Fonian not only clearly knew Lokakṣema's rendering, but for the most part, as here, essentially copied it.[113] However, we do find the term *shēn-shèlì* also employed in other works attributed to Fonian.

An example of the same compound *shēn-shèlì* appears in the first chapter of Fonian's translation (if indeed it is a translation) of the **Antarābhava-sūtra* (*Zhongyin jing* 中陰經). Although we cannot confirm this text's origins in either an Indic text or Tibetan translation, it is taken as a genuine translation and attributed to Fonian already in the fifth century by Sengyou.[114] It is indeed a very peculiar text, but whether it had a genuine Indic origin or may rather belong for instance to some Central Asian milieu is less important for us here than the particular Chinese vocabulary it contains. For in it we find a number of very similar expressions, the contexts of which (more or less) make clear

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112 T. 226 (VIII) 514b21-26 (*juan* 2).

113 See Lancaster 1968: 22.

114 T. 2145 (LV) 10c3 (*juan* 2), 111b22-23 (*juan* 15). According to Unebe 1970: 34, it was translated after 399.

that the term *shēn-shèlì* is being used in the sense of the body which the Buddha abandons upon death. At the very beginning of the text, we read that the Buddha is in Kapilavastu, and:[115]

(33)
爾時、如來忽然離碎<u>身舍利</u>。

At that time the Tathāgata suddenly abandoned to dissipation his <u>*shēn-shèlì*</u>.[116]

Immediately the sūtra begins to speak of how the earth quakes in accord with the vows of a Buddha, in which context we read:[117]

(34)
如來捨<u>身壽命</u>、現取滅度、入於中陰教化衆生。

The Tathāgata abandons his <u>bodily life</u> (*shēnshòumìng*), manifesting the assumption of nirvāṇa, and entering into the Intermediate State (**antarābhāva*) in order to convert beings.

Here it appears to be the body that the Tathāgata abandons, although the terminology, with *shēnshòumìng*, is not absolutely clear.[118] However, immediately

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115 T. 385 (XII) 1058c8-9 (*juan shang*). We may remark that it is not clear why he should be in Kapilavastu. We would rather expect Kuśinagara.

116 In this more than usually obscure passage, it is possible we should instead understand: "abandoned the *shèlì* [made up of his] pulverized body." I have no confidence in either interpretation, however.

117 T. 385 (XII) 1058c19-20 (*juan shang*).

118 One might understand *shēnshòumìng* 身壽命 instead as "body and life." Despite the fact that the compound is relatively well attested in Buddhist Chinese, the meaning is hard to pin down. Part of the problem is that the few examples I have been able to locate of Indic parallels suggest two different interpretations, both body and life, and length of life or physical life. Examples: *Drumakinnararājaparipṛcchā*, T. 624 (XV) 353a23-4 (*juan shang*): 其心不愛惜身壽命用菩薩故。是則爲寶 = (Harrison 1992: 78.13-14 [§4E]): *byang chub kyi yan lag la lta bas <u>lus dang srog</u> la mi lta ba'i sems rin po che*; *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāparamitā*, T. 226 (VIII) 528c3-4 (*juan* 4): 復次須菩提、阿惟越致菩薩摩訶薩用法故不貪所有、亦不惜身壽命 = (Wogihara 1932-1935: 691.4-6): *punar aparaṁ subhūte 'vinivartanīyo bodhisattvo mahāsattvaḥ saddharma-parigrahasya kṛtaśa <u>ātma</u>parityāgam api karoti | <u>jīvita</u>parityāgam api karoti …*; *Saṁghabhedavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, T. 1450 (XXIV) 109c6-7 (*juan* 3): 時阿私陀仙。既知太子必成正覺。即自觀身壽命長短 = (Gnoli 1977: 54.1): *viditvā ātmana <u>āyuḥprakarṣam</u> vyavalokayitum ārabdho…*; *Pañcaviṁśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, chapter 7, T. 223 (VIII) 390c5-6 (juan 23): 無有得菩薩記者、化作佛已捨身壽命入無除涅槃 = (Watanabe 1993: 129.21-23): *yam anuttarā-yāṁ samyaksaṁbodhau vyākuryāt sa <u>āyuḥ saṁskārān</u> avasṛjya nirmitam abhinirmāyānupadhiśeṣe*

afterwards the text returns to the *shēn-shèlì* vocabulary:[119]

(35)

爾時、世尊入火炎三昧、離碎身舍利…

At that time the Blessed One entered into the Fire Contemplation (**tejas-samādhi*) and abandoned his *shēn-shèlì* to dissipation ....[120]

Although the text is not perfectly clear to me, it appears to continue by saying that the Blessed One, the Buddha, sits down upon a large jewelled lotus, and then turns to his own *shèlì* and addresses it in verse (爾時、世尊向舍利、而說頌曰).[121] No matter how we take this it is, to say the least, unusual, if not downright bizarre. I nevertheless understand *shèlì* here to refer to the Buddha's body, since the verses begin:[122]

(36)

於無數劫中　養汝地種界　吾今離汝去　如蛇脱皮樂

For uncountable aeons I have nurtured the earth element in you [my body].[123]
Now I abandon you, as happily as a snake sloughs off his skin.

This too is far from completely transparent, but the text appears to have the Buddha addressing the body he has possessed for lifetimes (but then how did he transmigrate?), and that he now abandons. In any case, it seems almost impossible to understand *shèlì* as referring here to relics. A bit later in the text we find a sentence repeated three times (for the West, North and South):[124]

nirvāṇadhātau parnirvāṇāt.

Although the compound *shēnshòumìng* does not appear in dictionaries as such, the pairing itself is well attested. See for instance *Chuci* 楚辭 (The Songs of the South), 10 Da Zhao 大招 "The Great Summons," in which we find 永宜厥身　保壽命只.

119 T. 385 (XII) 1058c21-22 (*juan shang*).

120 Or again, perhaps "abandoned his pulverized body *shèlì*."

121 T. 385 (XII) 1058c25-26 (*juan shang*).

122 T. 385 (XII) 1058c27-28 (*juan shang*).

123 I follow the suggestion of Stefano Zacchetti, who understands *zhǒngjiè* 種界 as a rendition of *dhātu* (*metri causa*), so that *dìzhǒngjiè* 地種界 renders *pṛthivīdhātu*. He points out that references to the *pṛthivīdhātu* in the body are common in Buddhist literature. Seishi Karashima suggests the alternate possibility, "I have nurtured you on the earthly (or: terrestrial) sphere for countless aeons."

124 T. 385 (XII) 1059b23-25, c5-7, 16-18, 1060a9-11 (*juan shang*). Note also the expressions in the verses at 1060b4, 8 the second of which (本號釋迦文　留身舍利化) appears to have Śākyamuni transmigrate, leaving behind a *shēn-shèlì*.

(37)

~方去此八十七億河沙數、世界名娑呵。佛號釋迦牟尼。今取滅度捨身舍利、欲入中陰教化衆生*。

* with v.l. 16.

In the ~ direction, as far away from here as the sands of 8 trillion 700 billion Ganges rivers, there is a world called Sahā; its Buddha is named Śākyamuni. Now having died and disposed of his *shēn-shèlì*, he is about to enter the Intermediate State in order to convert beings.

Setting aside the weird theology of this text, which among other things certainly seems to say that a Buddha, even having obtained nirvāṇa, and thus extinction, nevertheless enters the intermediate state between births, something which by almost any stretch of the doctrinal imagination should be inconceivable, there can be little or no doubt that in this text *shēn-shèlì* repeatedly refers to the physical body of the Buddha which he abandons at death.[125] If my understanding of the text is correct, there is moreover also one instance in the introduction to the verses noticed above of *shèlì* alone employed in the sense of the Buddha's own "body," that to which he speaks.

Considering other translations of Fonian, for none of which, once again, we possess Indic or even Tibetan parallels, the vocabulary in these works appears to be at least somewhat different. In Fonian's translation of the *Zuishengwen pusa shizhu chugou duanjie jing* 最勝問菩薩十住除垢斷結經 we find a brief mention of the Buddha's statement to the bodhisattva Zuisheng (*Paramārtha): "After my parinirvāṇa, you should worship my *shèlì* 供養舍利 for twenty intermediate aeons." This is entirely ordinary: here *shèlì* can hardly be taken otherwise than as "relics," which moreover individually emit rays of light. The text then goes on to mention "worship of the whole-body *shèlì*," *gòngyǎng quánshēn-shèlì* 供養全身舍利. Immediately following this there is mention of "the *shèlì* of the corpse," *yíshēn-shèlì* 遺身舍利.[126] At least the "whole-body *shèlì*" are also said to individually emit rays of light. There is, in short, no indication here that *shèlì* should be taken other than in the sense of "relics," which is to say, some post-cremational remains. The meaning of "whole-body *shèlì*" remains unspecified, but at least here, since the relics individually emit light the term appears to refer to relics of the entire body, rather than to a single body which remains

125 On *shēn-shèlì* see further Additional Note 3.

126 T. 309 (X) 1032b29-c29 (*juan* 9). Earlier (1007a11-1009a27 [*juan* 6]) there is an entire chapter titled "Smashing the body," *suìshēn*.

intact, a sense the term *quánshēn-shèlì* certainly takes on later.

Similarly, although different from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* in almost every way, the *Pusa cong doushutian jiang shenmutai shuo guangpu jing* 菩薩從兜術天降神母胎說廣普經 is a Mahāyāna scripture which, like the non-Mahāyāna *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, also purports to depict the Buddha's last sermon just before his death, albeit while he is seated within his golden coffin, engaged in the *vajrasamādhi*. Here there are repeated references to "whole-body *shèlì*," *quánshēn-shèlì* 全身舍利, as well as to "pulverized-body *shèlì*," *suìshēn-shèlì* 碎身舍利.[127] It is often far from clear precisely what is intended by the word *shèlì* in this text, a problem that is indeed not uncommon in Mahāyāna scriptures and which, as I will argue, may be of some relevance to our basic problem.[128] It does, however, seem that sometimes *shèlì* should be taken here in the sense of "body,"[129] although the text also speaks of the famous battle among eight kings to divide the *shèlì*, *fēn shèlì* 分舍利, *shèlì* obviously here then to be understood as (divisible) relics.[130] Finally, an entire chapter of the *Pusa yingluo jing* 菩薩瓔珞經, attributed to Zhu Fonian, is devoted to worship of the *shèlì* 供養舍利, in which we repeatedly find the expression "worshipping the whole-body *shèlì*," *gòngyǎng quánshēn-shèlì* 供養全身舍利.[131]

Despite the appearance of the compound *shēn-shèlì*, which at least provisionally we may understand as appositional, and in which therefore *shèlì* is to be understood in the meaning of "body," in translations other than those of the *Dīrghāgama* and Dharmaguptaka Vinaya Fonian does not appear to use the word *shèlì* alone this sense, or—taking into account one obscure instance in the **Antarābhāva-sūtra*—at least not clearly so. Therefore, even if some specific intention lies behind the vocabulary employed in those passages we studied above in his translations of the *Dīrghāgama* and Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, that intentional usage does not appear to be mirrored elsewhere in his oeuvre.

127 See for example T. 384 (XII) 1030b, 1031b12-13 (*juan* 3). There may be a reference to this latter passage in Xuanying's 玄應 *Yiqiejing yinyi* 一切經音義 (reprint of 1870 edition [Taibei: Xinwenfeng, 1980]: 6.1b, p. 186), which says 處胎經云、並在金剛利際也. When at 1015b5-6 (*juan* 1) the text says 爾時、世尊欲入金剛三昧、碎身舍利, I believe that the word *suì* 碎 must be a verb: pulverizing the body into relics (compare 1023a14-15 [*juan* 2]: 身通菩薩入金剛三昧碎身如塵).

128 Some instances are, nevertheless, more obscure than others. For example, the meaning(s) of *shèlì* in the discussion at T. 384 (XII) 1033c (*juan* 4) is/are more than usually unclear to me.

129 As in the expression at T. 384 (XII) 1057b26 (*juan* 7): 供養釋迦文佛金棺舍利. However, here too the exact sense of this expression, and its syntax, are obscure to me: "worship the *shèlì* in Śākyamuni Buddha's golden coffin"?

130 T. 384 (XII) 1057c19 (*juan* 7), and continuing on 1058a.

131 T. 656 (XVI) 95a-97a (*juan* 11), chapter 31; attributed to Fonian already in T. 2145 (LV) 10b29 (*juan* 2).

There are several possible explanations for this situation. A number of translations are attributed to Fonian, many of which he is said to have translated along with others, but those cited above he is said to have rendered alone in the final phase of his career, 391-413, during which he also translated the *Dīrghāgama* and Dharmaguptaka Vinaya along with Buddhayaśas.[132] One possibility is that, as the Chinese collaborator of a venerable foreign monk-scholar, Fonian did not feel completely free to express himself in his most eloquent Chinese; indeed, he is reported to have been criticized earlier for his tendency to unduly embellish his Chinese translations of relatively simpler and more straightforward Indic texts.[133] It is also possible that Buddhayaśas knew just enough Chinese to meddle with the translation of his Chinese amanuensis, perhaps insisting here and there on a specific wording.[134] While these possibilities cannot be discounted, and may be contributing factors, it is also possible that the difference in genre between Āgama and Vinaya translations on the one hand and Mahāyāna sūtras on the other is somehow relevant. We may leave this question to the side for a moment, however, and instead briefly consider the question whether we might find support for the basic notion of a distinct use of body vocabulary with regard to the corpse of the Buddha in Indic sources themselves. And here we are in luck.

We do indeed find some Indic evidence for a similar or even parallel distinction in usage to that postulated for *shèlì* and *shēn* in the terms *śarīra* and *kāya*, respectively. In the Sanskrit *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* of the Sarvāstivādins, as edited by Waldschmidt, there are several cases in which the word *kāya* is used in reference to the dead body of the cakravartin, the universal emperor, the vocabulary switching to *śarīra* when the subject becomes the dead body of the Buddha. The word *kāya* is used in reference to the body of the cakravartin twice in the printed text, although the actual reading is attested in only one

132 According to Unebe 1970, but here too things are less than entirely clear; see Okayama 1984: 25-29, 40 n. 62. It may well be that Fonian's translation style evolved considerably during his life, but since all of the works considered here appear to date to the same period, this too probably cannot be considered a significant or even a relevant factor. Note that the **Antarābhāva-sūtra* translation is also, as noted above, said to date after 399.

133 See Sengyou's 僧祐 *Chu sanzang ji ji* 出三藏記集 T. 2145 (LV) 71c1-4 (*juan* 10), and Unebe 1970: 36. For a discussion of the criticisms leveled against Fonian's translations, see Kamata 1990: 116-119 (which appears to be rather closely based on Ōchō 1958: 228-232). The debate pitting "literal" against "literary" translations is old; see the references in Okayama 1980: 128.

134 This does not, however, appear to have been the case with the translation of the **Daśabhūmivibhāṣā*, which was translated by Kumārajīva with the assistance and guidance of his teacher Buddhayaśas. The situation here too, however, is rather complicated; the best study of the issue is Tōdō 1953 (see also Takemura 1979: 21-22).

manuscript fragment.[135] The complementary word *śarīra* is attested several times in the sense of the Buddha's dead body.[136] Moreover, the word *kāya* is used by the Buddha himself in reference to his own (living) body,[137] which, like the Chinese usage we saw above, might also support the suggestion that there is a distinction between the respectful word which others use in reference to the body of the Buddha, *śarīra*, and the ordinary word he himself uses in reference to his own body, *kāya*, although in this case the referent is clearly a living body, not a dead one.[138] In addition to this, the text also contains two verses, which are repeated verbatim in Sanskrit in the *Avadānaśataka*, in which Ānanda is made to speak of the dead body of the Buddha as *kāya*. These verses are parallel to, but quite significantly different from, the verses attributed to Ānanda in the translation of Zhi Qian we noticed above.[139] There is nothing in the Sanskrit verses of the docetic undercurrents Pryzluski sees in Ānanda's verses in Zhi Qian's translation, but the body language in both seems to be as similar as it could be across the Indic-Sinitic linguistic divide. The usage in these Sanskrit verses again might support part of the hypothesis we first offered with respect to the usages in the Chinese translation of the *Dīrghāgama*, namely that as his close personal disciple Ānanda may refer to the Buddha with less than the most elevated vocabulary. On the other hand, in fact, as again we saw above, Ānanda actually uses both *fóshēn* and *shèlì* vocabulary in the *Dīrghāgama*, something which speaks against such a hypothesis.

Moreover, not all Indic evidence is quite so (apparently) consistent with our initial hypothesis. In a single fragment of the Gāndhārī version text of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, which may—but by no means need necessarily—belong to the Dharmaguptakas, we find the following:[140]

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135 Reconstructed at Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 36.7, after 46.7, which relies on the manuscript 173.5. The differential usages noted here have at least been recognized by Roth 1987: 293-294.

136 Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 47.4 (= 174.3), 47.23 (= 121.3), 49.15 (=166.5) and 49.20 (= 124.1) are the only examples which are not reconstructed.

137 Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 42.10 (= 114.5 and 223.5).

138 In the Pāli passages parallel to those cited above in which the Buddha speaks of his bodily pain, the text mentions the Buddha's discomfort without explicit reference to his body. So too in Waldschmidt's printed text of the Sanskrit (1950-1951: §14.1ff.). However, as Klaus Wille points out to me, a Turfan fragment of §14.19 (SHT I.618a r4, quoted in Waldschmidt et al. 1973- s.v. kāya 2) has *etarhi tathāgatasya kāyo jirṇo* [read: *jīrṇo*] *vṛddho*.

139 See above **§16**. For the Sanskrit, see Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 49.23-24 (124.3-5, 233.3-4) = Speyer 1906-1909: II.199.12-200.6). These verses have been discussed several times, most notably by Przyluski 1918-1920: 17-18 = 179-180, and Vaudeville 1964: 82-86. We cannot discount the fact that metrical considerations may well play a part in word selection in verse.

140 Salomon and Allon 2000: 247 = SC 2179/44a, recto. See also their n. to r-1 and 2 on 260.

(38)

///droniye nikṣipu satahasya acayen teladronito udhvaritvaṁ sarvagaṁdhotakehi kayaṁ sāpayisu

///[stra]yuvaśatehi kayaṁ veḍhayisu ahatehi paṁcahi vastrayugaśatehi kayaṁ veḍhitva ayaṁsadroni telena

///+ .v. + + + [dh. n.] ci[da] cintva raño mahasudarśanasya śarira j̄apayisu catumaharpathe sthuvaṁ akarisu

The editors translate this as follows:

> ... they put it in a vat ... After an interval of a week, they took (it) out of the vat of oil and bathed the body with all fragrant liquids ... They wrapped the body with (five*) hundred pairs of (unbeaten*) cloth. Having wrapped the body with five hundred pairs of unbeated cloth, (they filled*?) an iron vat with oil ... after building a pyre of (all*) fragrant [woods], they burned the body of King Mahāsudarśana. They built a stūpa at the crossing of four main roads.

Here in this short fragment, referring to the corpse of King Mahāsudarśana, not the Buddha, in the first three instances the dead body of the king is spoken of as *kāya*, while in the fourth case, referring to the very same corpse, the word employed is instead *śarīra*. Although to be sure our text is very fragmentary, there is no suggestion here that the speaker or point of view of the narration has changed between those sentences in which *kāya* is used and that in which we find instead *śarīra*. Apparently, if we may judge by such a short and imperfectly preserved passage, the authors of this version employed both *kāya* and *śarīra* equivalently in the simple sense of corpse. In addition, as we saw at the very outset of our investigations in the first passage we cited from the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* (§ **1**), that Theravāda text in Pāli uses the term *sarīra* equally to refer to the corpse of both the Buddha and the cakravartin, not utilizing the term *kāya* at all. These Indic sources then suggest that, on the one hand, it is possible, as the Sanskrit *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* shows, to support in Indian sources the hypothesis of a differential usage of *śarīra* and *kāya*. According to this understanding, *śarīra* is a respectful term nevertheless functionally equivalent to *kāya* in terms of its basic referent. Such a distinction could possibly be represented in Chinese by a differential use of *shèlì* and *shēn*, respectively. However, on the other hand there is also evidence in both the Gāndhārī *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* and in the Pāli *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* suggesting that this need not necessarily be the case, that even within exactly the same environment, namely that of discussions of the disposition of the corpse of a Buddha, such Indic texts may make no distinction in the terms used to describe the bodies of a universal emperor and Buddha. It thus appears to be possible for Indian Buddhist texts to employ distinct words for the corpse of a Buddha and

that of a less exalted figure. It is also possible for such texts to discuss, in this very same context, the disposition of a corpse, of the Buddha or of another, without recourse to any such distinction in vocabulary. And since we have no way of knowing what terminology may have been employed in the Indic sources from which the *Dīrghāgama* and Dharmaguptaka Vinaya were translated, we consequently have no direct means of discerning whether such a possible Indic distinction is to be imagined as underlying the usages we encounter in Chinese translations.

That said, naturally it need by no means be the case that we must necessarily suppose the Chinese translator of the *Dīrghāgama* to have been attempting to mirror some pattern he saw (or thought he saw) in his Indic source. We may imagine as a real possibility that he simply introduced such a distinction on his own.[141] If this is so, our search for Indic prototypes or models is pointless, and we must instead concentrate our attention on the Chinese context itself. But there are, of course, other possible explanations as well. For instance, we might have to do here with a simple case of elegant variation. However, there is no other evidence of such elegant variation elsewhere in these repetitive and formulaic episodes, which suggests that elegant variation is an unlikely explanation for the phenomenon we see. Another possibility is that we have to do in the *Dīrghāgama* translation with rhythmic considerations, the selection of the one character term *shēn* 身 versus the two character *shèlì* 舍利 helping to maintain the normal sequence of four character phrases. This is an attractive idea, which nevertheless seems to be contradicted by two cases: in expression (§**20**) ①, one character would be rhythmically preferable to the two that are used, and (§**23**) ④, in which the opposite is the case, and two characters would be rhythmically better than one. It would appear, therefore, that this idea cannot be maintained.

Let us approach the question now from another point of view, from the Chinese side, as it were, rather than the Indic. Earlier we explored the meaning of "ordinary" body terminology, the *shēn* and *tǐ* of our translators. In contrast to this basically clear usage, just what does *shèlì* mean in Chinese, and how well documented is the use of the word in the sense of "body"? The word *shèlì* is well attested in what we may say is its "ordinary" meaning of "relics" from a very early period. While there is no question that it is a transcription of Indic terminology specific to Buddhism,[142] we apparently find it preserved earliest in

141 Perhaps much as the Japanese translators mentioned earlier in n. 94 introduce respect vocabulary into their modern Japanese renderings of Chinese texts.

142 That is to say, the Chinese knew some Indic vocabulary before the introduction of Buddhism, but *shèlì* so far as is known does not belong to this (extremely small) stock of pre-Buddhist loan words. In this regard, see for example Pulleyblank 1983: 76-77.

secular works, in the "Rhapsody of the Western Capital" (*Xījing fu* 西京賦) of Zhang Heng 張衡 (78-130 C.E.), and in the "Administrative Ceremonials of Han Officials Selected for Use" (*Hanguan dianzhi yishi xuan yong* 漢官典職儀式選用) of Cai Zhi 蔡植 in the mid-second century. While these instances are open to some doubt concerning their referent(s), quite clear is the occurrence of the word (written *shělì* 捨俐, slightly differently than is usual later[143]), on the wall of a tomb, dating from the second half of the second century, in Helinger 和林格爾 in Inner Mongolia.[144] Since this inscription accompanies or labels an illustration of relics, there is no doubt about the intended meaning or referent of the term. I do not know the earliest occurrence of the word in Chinese Buddhist scripture, but it appears already in the work of Lokakṣema, both in his translation of the *Pratyutpanna-saṁmukhāvasthita-samādhi-sūtra*[145] and, as we saw above, in his rendering of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāparamitā*, both dating to 179 C.E.[146] *Shèlì* is, naturally, recorded in the meaning "relics" by comprehensive modern dictionaries, which do also however note the meaning "body" or "corpse."[147] In this they are very probably basing themselves ultimately on

143 The Early Middle Chinese pronounciation of the transcriptions would have differed slightly: the transcription of the usual term *shèlì* 舍利 may be reconstructed (following Pulleyblank 1991) as ɕia^{h}-li^{h}, while the final of the first syllable of *shělì* 捨俐 would have glottalization rather than aspiration (marking Rising as opposed to Departing Tone), ɕia'-li^{h}. I do not know the significance of this difference, if any. (Variation in, or absence of, radicals is common in earlier Chinese writing.)

144 All of these examples are discussed in Zürcher 1990: 160-161, 164.

145 On the date, see Harrison 1990: 256, 259. The word appears in T. 418 (XIII) 911b25 (*juan* 2), translated in Harrison 1998: 52, corresponding to 13K8 in Harrison 1990: 103, and T. 418 (XIII) 916b1 (*juan* 3), translated in Harrison 1998: 79, corresponding roughly to 18K2 in Harrison 1990: 148.

146 For the date, Harrision 1993, esp. 141-144. Wogihara 1932-1935: 270 (Mitra 94); T. 224 (VIII) 435c4-5 (*juan* 2), and elsewhere. Compare the translation of the same text attributed in part to Zhu Fonian, T. 226 (VIII) 517b19-20 (*juan* 2).

147 Oda 1917: 813b; Nakamura 1981: 602b; Morohashi 1955-1960: 9.466b (30278.60); Luo 1986-1993: 5184b.

I would like to be able to say that neither in our texts nor elsewhere is the term *śarīra* in the sense of "relics" ever clearly translated (or transcribed) in Chinese with a term other than *shèlì* or variants thereof. However, it is generally difficult to know whether instances of Chinese words such as *gǔ* 骨, bones, or *huī* 灰, ashes, for example, occuring in funeral contexts might have been intended to render Indic *śarīrāṇi* or otherwise to indicate relics as such (as opposed to translating terminology such as *asthīni*, bones, for instance—perhaps functionally equivalent, but nevertheless at least lexically distinct).

Likewise, I do not wish to imply that every instance of references to "relics" is rendered in Chinese translations with terms which unambiguosly have this literal meaning. A somewhat extreme case is found in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinayakṣudrakavastu*, in which we find the

the glossaries of the Chinese Buddhist lexicographers, which at least modern specialized Buddhist dictionaries indeed frequently cite. That the authors of these glossaries infrequently mention the word's more common sense of "relics" is undoubtedly due precisely to its currency.[148] For the task of these lexicographers was to account for difficult words or difficult meanings of words, and their neglect of *shèlì* in the sense of relics only underscores this as its generally assumed meaning, one calling for no further comment.

Although our investigations above leave no doubt that *shèlì* was being used in the sense of "corpse" in some passages, we do not have to speculate that later Chinese readers could conceivably have seen *shèlì* as a term for corpse. Yuanzhao 元照 (1048-1116) in his commentary on the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya says the following, even if not necessarily in direct reference to any particular passage in which this sense is relevant:[149]

(39)
舍利。此翻遺身、即死屍也。

Shèlì: Here [in Chinese this is] translated "left-behind body," (*yíshēn*), that is, corpse.

Despite this reference in a relatively late Chinese commentary, it is curious that in neither of the two most important, and centuries older, comprehensive glossaries of Chinese Buddhist terms is the use of *shèlì* in any of the passages

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following verse concerning the relics of Ānanda (Derge Kanjur 6, *'dul ba*, *da*, 322a3-4): *ye shes rdo rje rnod po yis* | | *rang gi lus kyi ri bcom ste* | | *phyed ni mi yi dbang po byin* | | *phyed ni thub pas tshogs rnams byin* | |. This appears in Chinese as follows (T. 1451 [XXIV] 411a2-3 [*juan* 40]): 以利智金剛　解自身令破　半與王城主　半與廣嚴人. Both of these translations, for which we have no extant Indic original, mean almost the same thing: "With the sharp diamond of wisdom he destroyed the mountain of his own body [Chn: scattered his own body and caused it to break apart], giving half to the king of Rājagṛha, half to the king of Vaiśalī." Here, in reference to what are clearly the relics (as post-mortem remains) of Ānanda, we find the word "body" (*shēn*, *lus*) used to specify what is to be divided between the competing factions.

148 There are exceptions. In the early twelfth century *Fanyi mingyi ji* 翻譯名義集 of Fayun 法雲, the definition of *shèlì* includes no recognition of any sense of "body," citing only its meaning "relics," T. 2131 (LIV) 1138b4-5 (*juan* 5): 舍利。新云室利羅。或設利羅。此云骨身。又云靈骨。即所遺骨分。通名舍利。

Note that part of this definition, *gǔshēn* 骨身, appears to have be used in the sense of bones or skeleton, but not body as such. See for instance T. 220 (VII) 360a11 (*juan* 466), T. 1509 (XXV) 79a5, 16 (*juan* 3), 514b3 (*juan* 64), and T. 1559 (XXIX) 295b25, c1 (*juan* 20), where it is equivalent to *asthisaṁkāla* (Hirakawa 1977: 144b), on which see Edgerton 1953 s.v. asthi-śakalā. For the inversion *shēngǔ*, see below, n. 157.

149 T. 1805 (XL) 412c27-28 (*juan* 16).

cited above addressed.[150] This does not mean, however, that the word is not otherwise taken up in these glossaries, and defined as "body." What is peculiar, however, is that despite such definitions, the source passages to which these definitions are applied often do not bear out the offered interpretation. That is to say, the glossaries recognize *shèlì* in the sense of "corpse" or "body," but in the original contexts of the passages they cite in support of this definition (or the other way round), *shèlì* does not actually appear to have this sense. Let us look at the examples.

Among the earliest of the glossaries is Xuanying's 玄應 *Yiqiejing yinyi* 一切經音義 of 649. There, in regard to a passage from the very beginning of the Lotus Sūtra, we read the following:[151]

(40)
舍利。正言、設利羅。譯云身骨。舍利有全身者、有碎身者。

çiaʰ-liʰ (*shèlì*): correctly [to be transcribed] çiat-liʰ-la (*shèlìluó*).[152] This is translated "relic" (literally, "body-bone," *shēngǔ*). *Shèlì* is of [two types:] the whole-body (*quánshēn*), and the pulverized-body (*suìshēn*).

Here Xuanying introduces a two-fold specification, that of the complete body—without (at least any explicit) distinction between corpse and living body—and that of what are sometimes called "pulverized-body relics," *suìshēn-shèlì* 碎身舍利,[153] namely what we would normally think of as *shèlì* in the simple sense of relics as such.[154] These are terms we briefly noticed above, and to

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150 See T. 2128 (LIV) 650a (*juan* 52), 705b (*juan* 59); Xuanying's 玄應 *Yiqiejing yinyi* 一切經音義, reprint of 1870 edition (Taibei: Xinwenfeng, 1980): 12.2b, p. 370, 14.16a, p. 475.

151 Reprint of 1870 edition (Taibei: Xinwenfeng, 1980): 6.1b, p. 186.

152 The suggestion here and below that *shèlì* is an erroneous transcription is based on the lexicographer's belief that *śa-rī-ra* must be properly transcribed, accounting for every syllable, which *shè-lì* does not do.

153 This term is found for instance in such dictionaries as Oda 1917: 587b and Nakamura 1981: 447d. See Additional Note 4.

154 It is not wholly impossible that, even if only vaguely, this two-fold distinction may also reflect some idea of Indic *śarīra* as derived either from the root √*śri*, "to rely on, be supported," or √*śṝ*, "to be crushed," these corresponding respectively to the senses of "(whole) body" and "(granular) relics." See Mochizuki 1932-1936: 2185c; Monier-Williams 1899: 1057c.

Sometimes it seems that *śarīra* has been taken explicitly in the sense of "support." See for example the expression in the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* (Kondō 1936: 5.7; Rahder 1926: 3.30 [1E]), *dharmakāyajñānaśarīrāya*, translated by Śikṣānanda (T. 287 [X] 536a6 [*juan* 1]) with: 已證法身智所依故, in which *suǒyī* 所依 seems to translate *śarīra*. In the *Yogācārabhūmi* (Bhattacharya 1957: 13.17 = T. 1579 [XXX] 280c28 [*juan* 1], translated by Xuanzang), *prakṛtyā durbalaśarīrayā*

which we will return in a moment. Xuanying's translation of *shèlì* is *shēngǔ*, a word that dictionaries tell us should be understood as "body."[155] However, examples in Buddhist translations make it very clear that the word should rather be understood, in almost all cases,[156] as "relics."[157] Moreover, Xuanying with his specification of "pulverized body" clearly allows that the reference may be to relics as usually understood. This does not appear to be the case with two other references to precisely the same occurrence of *shèlì* in the same Lotus Sūtra passage. The lexicographer Huilin 慧琳, in his somewhat later but identically titled *Yiqiejing yinyi* 一切經音義 (783-807), has in reference to the same scriptural occurrence only the following:[158]

(41)
舍利。設利羅。此云體。

çia^{h}-li^{h} (*shèlì*):[equivalent to] çiat-li^{h}-la (*shèlìluó*). Here [in Chinese] this is expressed with "body" (*tǐ*).

Just a few years later than Xuanying, in Kuiji's 窺基 seventh century commentary on the Lotus Sūtra, *Miaofa lianhuajing xuanzan* 妙法蓮華經玄讃, we find something very similar:[159]

(42)
梵云、設利羅。體也。舍利者、訛。

Sanskrit çiat-li^{h}-la (*shèlìluó*) [means] body (*tǐ*). [The transcription] çia^{h}-li^{h} (*shèlì*) is an error.

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is rendered 依止性羸劣故, in which *yīzhǐ* 依止 seems to translate *śarīra*.

155 Morohashi 1955-1960: 10.969b (38034.45) defines the term as "body" (*karada*), but cites only a Japanese authority. Luo 1986-1993: 6214b also defines it as "body" (*shēntǐ* 身体, *tǐgé* 体格), but likewise his earliest citation is quite late, from the eighteenth century *Dream of the Red Chamber* (*Hongloumeng* 紅樓夢).

156 Sometimes it is of course not to be read as a compound at all, but as two different items, body and bones. See for instance T. 663 (XVI) 335c24 (*juan* 1) 己身骨髓肉血 = Nobel 1937: 6.12-7.1, *svaśarīra-māṁsa-rudhirâsthi-majjayā* ....

157 For other possibilities, see for instance T. 99 (II) 242b8 (*juan* 34) = *Saṁyutta-Nikāya* ii.185, where the equivalent is *atthi*; T. 125 (II) 606a6 (*juan* 12); T. 156 (III) 138b25 (*juan* 3), 140c4 (*juan* 3), 150b15 (*juan* 5); T. 310 (XI) 336b12 (*juan* 58), and so on. (Also Karashima 1998: 388.) See n. 148 above.

158 T. 2128 (LIV) 483b21 (*juan* 27).

159 T. 1723 (XXXIV) 682b27-28 (*juan* 2-*ben*).

Now, what is interesting is that all three of these works, two of which acknowledge as the meaning of *shèlì* only "body," refer to the following passage in Kumārajīva's translation of the Lotus Sūtra:[160]

(43)
復見諸佛般涅槃後、以佛舍利起七寶塔。

Again, it was seen that after the buddhas attained parinirvāṇa, seven-jewelled stūpas were erected with the Buddha's relics.

It is clear from this passage that *shèlì* here does not mean "body," at least in any conventional sense, but rather plainly points to the "relics" which are normally placed within a stūpa, a reliquary mound or monument. We know this must be the case since what is placed in a stūpa is post-cremation remains, not a corpse. And in fact this attribution of the meaning "body" to *shèlì* in instances in which, contextually, we would expect "relics," is found elsewhere in the work of these same lexicographers. In reference to the *Avataṁsaka* sūtra, Huilin 慧琳 says:[161]

(44)
舍利。正言、設利羅。或云實唎。此翻爲身也。

çia^{h}-li^{h} (*shèlì*): correctly çiat-li^{h}-la (*shèlìluó*). Also expressed with ʑit-li^{h} (*shílì*). Here [in Chinese this is] translated as "body" (*shēn*).

Once again, however, the context of the passage in the *Avataṁsaka* itself from which this term is being drawn makes it crystal clear that *shèlì* in the sūtra itself does not, and cannot, refer to "body," but without doubt means "relics." The sūtra passage reads:[162]

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160 T. 262 (IX) 2b23-24 (*juan* 1). To this corresponds the following Sanskrit text (Kern and Nanjio 1908-1912: 7.2-3): *ye ca teṣu buddhakṣetreṣu parinirvṛtānāṁ buddhānāṁ bhagavatāṁ dhātustūpā ratnamayās te 'pi sarve saṁdarśyante sma*. This reading is the consensus of the Nepalese manuscripts; see Toda 1998: 20-22. The Kashgar text (Toda 1981: 14b2-3) is slightly different: *ye ca teṣu buddhakṣetreṣu buddhā bhagavaṁta parinirvṛ(tā)s teṣāṁ dhātustūpāni sarvāṇi ratnamayāni aśeṣeṇa saṁdarśyaṁte sma*. So too is the Gilgit manuscript (Watanabe 1975: 5.16-17): *ye ca teṣu buddhakṣetreṣu parinirvṛtānāṁ buddhānāṁ bhagavatāṁ ratnamayā dhātustūpā[s] te 'pi sarve saṁdarśyante sma*.

161 T. 2128 (LIV) 448a2 (*juan* 23).

162 T. 279 (X) 248a26-27 (*juan* 47). Cp. Cleary 1986: 236. (The corresponding Tibetan translation is worded slightly differently; see Derge Kanjur 44, *phal chen*, *ga* 28a. See also T. 278 [IX] 597b4 [*juan* 31].)

(45)
隨其樂欲、自碎其身以爲舍利、無量無數不可思議。

[Buddhas, in order to save beings] as they wish pulverize their own bodies into relics (*shèlì*), innumerable, uncountable, inconceivable.

Here the text quite explicitly distinguishes *shēn* from *shèlì*. It is this body, *shēn*, which is pulverized, *suì* 碎, creating *shèlì*. This wording serves to highlight the oddity of Huilin's equivalence of *shèlì* with *shēn*.

As a final example of glossorial interpretation, in the fifth century vocabulary study *Fan fanyu* 翻梵語, we find the following:[163]

(46)
舍利。譯曰。身、亦云體。

çia^h-li^h (*shèlì*): this is translated as "body," *shēn*, or again *tǐ*.

The passage in reference to which this definition is offered, however, is the following, from the *Da Zhidu lun* 大智度論:[164]

[163] T. 2130 (LIV) 986b02 (*juan* 1). According to the hypothesis of Ono Genmyō, the text dates to between the Southern Qi 南齊 and the Sui 隋, placing it probably in the Liang 梁. Ono follows an indication in the *Shittan Mokuroku* 悉曇目錄 of Enryakuji Shingen 延暦寺眞源 that attributes the text to the Liang monk Baochang 寶唱 (483-518), and has it brought to Japan by Ennin 圓仁 in the ninth century. See Ono 1931, and the summary by Tsujimori Yōshū 辻森要修 in Ono 1932-1935: 10.213b-214a. The relevant reference is in Bussho Kankōkai 1914: 187b.

Of course, there are other possible references to glosses on *shèlì*. For instance, in Puguang's 普光 commentary on Xuanzang's translation of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (T. 1821 *Jushe lunji* 倶舍論記 [XLI] 156a24-26 [*juan* 8], commenting on T. 1558 [XXIX] 44a24 [*juan* 8]), explaining *śarīradhātu* (Pradhan 1975: 119.24, cy. to III.9) we find:

身界。梵曰、馱都即佛身界也。亦名室利羅。唐言體、佛身體也。舊云舍利。訛也。

*Śarīradhātu (here translated: "body-realm"). In Sanskrit *dhātu* is the realm of the Buddha's body. It is also called çit-li^h-la (*shìlìluó*, **śarīra*). In Chinese we say body (*tǐ*), the physical body of the Buddha (*fóshēntǐ*). Anciently it was termed çia^h-li^h (*shèlì*), which is an error.

[164] T. 1509 (XXV) 278a16-17 (*juan* 30); translated in Lamotte 1944-1980: 1940. Note that although the *Fan fanyu* attributes the quotation to *juan* 29, no mention of *shèlì* occurs in that *juan*; either the text known to Baochang was divided differently, or an error occurred at some stage in the composition or transmission of his text. Although more research would be needed to confirm the hypothesis, the tables in Itō 1996 suggest the former as more likely.

(47)
或現入涅槃、起七寶塔。遍諸國土令衆生供養舍利。

[The Buddha] manifests his entry into nirvāṇa, and [others] erect seven-jewelled stūpas. Throughout all the lands, [the Buddha] causes beings to worship [his] relics (*shèlì*).

It is evident in this passage (incidentally, from a text translated by Kumārajīva, also responsible for a Lotus Sūtra translation and a contemporary of Buddhayaśas and Zhu Fonian) that despite the clear equivalences for *shèlì* suggested by the glossary, consisting of two words for "body," here *shèlì* has (at least on the surface) nothing other than its ordinary meaning of "relics."

What becomes disappointingly clear from our survey of these lexicographical notes is that while Chinese Buddhist commentators were obviously aware that *shèlì* could mean "body," they apparently had very little good sense of when this meaning should be appropriately applied, and when not. And if these specialists in the vocabulary of Chinese Buddhism were unclear on the concept, what may we imagine of the unschooled reader?

III) *Śarīra* in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* and Elsewhere

In looking at translations other than those of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* but attributed to the same translators we encountered, most especially in the compound expression *shēn-shèlì*, some indications that may help us understand the special employment of *shèlì* in the sense of the uncremated corpse of the Buddha. Let us now go a bit farther, and see if there might be other cases in Chinese translations belonging to the same general period in which the word *shèlì* is used in something other than the straightforward sense of "relics." Since I, at any rate, have so far been unable to locate any clear case in which *shèlì* refers to a corpse in this body of literature, our focus must turn from possible distinctions in diction or honorific usage to metaphorical or deliberately multivalent phrasings in which the term *shèlì* appears.

Perhaps the most notable examples appear in the enormously influential *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* and its two Chinese translations by Dharmarakṣa (published in 286 C.E.) and Kumārajīva (published in 406 C.E.). Recalling the starting point of our inquiries in Schopen's thesis about the Pāli *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its treatment of *sarīra*, one famous passage in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* appears as especially interesting, because it concisely presents precisely the contrast we noted at the outset between grammatically singular and plural uses of Indic *śarīra*. The Sanskrit text reads as follows:[165]

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[165] Kern and Nanjio 1908-1912: 231.9-11. This reading is also found in other Nepalese texts (Toda 1985: 3; 1991: 132-134; 2001: 126). The same passage in the Kashgar manuscript of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* reads slightly differently, although the point is the same (Toda 1981: 113 = 220a2-4): *na cātra tathāgataśarīrāṇi dātavyāni* | *tat kasya hetor ekaghanam eva bhaiṣajyarāja tatra pṛthivīpradeśe tathāgataśarīram upanikṣiptaṁ bhavati* |. No Gilgit text is available.

See Tsukamoto 1976: 45-49, who suggests that the "whole body" of the Tathāgata here refers to the teachings written down in the form of a book. On this "equation" of the *ekaghanaṁ tathāgataśarīram*, which Schopen translates (apparently against the grammar, but see below) as "entire tathāgata-relic," with the "presence of the book," namely the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* itself, see Schopen 1975: 167.

This passage has been treated by Kajiyama 2001: 5-6. It is worth noting a doctrinally significant feature of his translation of the first sentence: しかし、そこにはけっして如来の諸骨片が安置されるべきではない. Here Kajiyama interprets the expression *na … avaśyam … pratiṣṭhāpayitavyāni* as a strong negative imperative. The implication then, for Kajiyama, is that it is strictly forbidden to establish a relic stūpa. I believe that this seriously misrepresents the intention of the text, which rather signifies that such an establishment is "not necessary," with the implication that it is nevertheless permissable. This is how the text was read by its Tibetan translators (Nakamura 1976: 231: *der de bzhin gshegs pa'i sku gdung nges par gshag mi dgos so*), as well as by modern interpreters (see the next note). Kajiyama also gives Kumārajīva's 不須復安舍利 its traditional *kakikudashi* reading また舍利を安んずべからず (e.g., Nakada 1989: 652). Despite this convention, which would probably be understood as indicating a strong prohibition ("must not"), it seems to me almost certain that *bùxū* 不須 here means "is

(48)

na ca tasminn avaśyaṁ tathāgataśarīrāṇi pratiṣṭhāpayitavyāni | tat kasya hetoḥ | ekaghanam eva tasmiṁs tathāgataśarīram upanikṣiptaṁ bhavati |

Provisionally assuming that one may simply and mechanically maintain the posited distinction of plural *śarīrāṇi* as "relics" and singular *śarīra* as "body," we may translate this as follows:[166]

> The relics of the Tathāgata need not necessarily be installed there [in the previously mentioned shrine]. Why? [Because] the body of the Tathāgata is [already] deposited there in one single mass.

It should be quite plain from the outset that the Indic scripture here is playing with the meanings of the word *śarīra* (although certainly not in any humorous sense). The English translation offered, while defensible from a philological viewpoint, may nevertheless thus be said to miss or at least obscure something of the work the text is trying to do when it employs two entirely unrelated English terms to render the two instances of *śarīra* in these sentences.[167] It may even not be going too far to suggest that an awareness of the similar dual usage in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* (or possibly elsewhere) is expected to inform the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*'s audience's appreciation of this doubling.[168] In this case, in light of the Indic text's certainly self-conscious use of two forms of the word, it is hard to know how to evaluate the two Chinese translations of the passage, in which different choices appear to have been made by the respective translators in response to the challenge of representing in a foreign idiom a text of many layers. Kumārajīva's translation in his *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經 is, as is usually the case, quite straightforward and understandable:[169]

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not necesssary."

[166] Compare also the following translations: Burnouf (1852: 141) "il n'est pas nécessaire que les reliques du Tathâgata y soient déposées. Pourquoi cela? C'est que le corps du Tathâgata y est en quelque sorte contenu tout entier." Kern (1884: 220) "it is not necessary to depose in it relics of the Tathâgata. For the body of the Tathâgata is, so to say, collectively deposited there." I do not understand "en quelque sorte" and "so to say." Do Burnouf and Kern read **ekaghanam iva*? See also Iwamoto in Sakamoto and Iwamoto 1964: 155 and Matsunami et al. 1976: 15.

[167] I leave aside as irrelevant to our main point the additional weakness that by subordinating to the rear of the English sentence its rendering of *ekaghanam eva*, something of the adversative force of this expression is lost.

[168] Such allusions are almost common in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*. Another example is the so-called Parable of the Burning House, which without doubt alludes to the so-called Fire Sermon in the Āgama-Nikāya literature.

(49)
不須復安<u>舍利</u>。所以者何。此中已有如來<u>全身</u>。

There is no need to settle the <u>relics</u> (*shèlì*) [there]. Why? [Because] the <u>complete body</u> (*quánshēn*) of the Tathāgata is in this [stūpa] already.

There is no question that Kumārajīva's rendering, like our English above, is entirely defensible and philologically "correct," whether or not—again like our English—it may be judged to have fully captured the range of nuances of its Indic source.[170] Dharmarakṣa, on the other hand, in his earlier *Zhengfahua jing* 正法華經 seems both to have grasped one essential point of the passage obscured by our English and Kumārajīva's Chinese, namely the literal identity of (grammatically plural) *śarīrāṇi* as relics and (grammatically singular) *śarīra* as body, while at the same time to have produced a translation which yields rather little obvious sense of its own:[171]

(50)
不當復著<u>佛舍利</u>也。所以者何。具爲全著<u>如來舍利</u>。

One should, again, not place the <u>Buddha's *shèlì*</u> [in a stūpa]. Why? [Because] the <u>Tathāgata's *shèlì*</u> is in its entirety completely placed [there already].

What precisely might have been intended here by "**buddha-śarīra*," *fó-shèlì* 佛舍利, and "**tathāgata-śarīra*," *rúlái-shèlì* 如來舍利,[172] I do not know, but it seems reasonable to speculate that Dharmarakṣa both used *shèlì* to represent both singular and plural forms of *śarīra*, in order to emphasize their literal identity, and yet distinguished the two forms, which he perhaps simultaneously realized to have distinct meanings, by the addition of the (nevertheless otherwise essentially synonymous) modifiers *fó*, Buddha, and *rúlái*, Tathāgata.[173] While the result can hardly be called a grand success, if my interpretation of the intent behind this rendering is correct, it nevertheless serves to demonstrate the translator's earnest quest to preserve something of the multiplicity and layering of meaning he found in the scripture.

The key to understanding what is going on here is the realization that the issue is less one of philology than of doctrine. Other passages in the same text which refer to the body of the Buddha demonstrate the complexity of the problem. For example, one sentence which employs a different Indic term for "body" reads as follows:[174]

(51)
mama khalu bhikṣavaḥ parinirvṛtasyāsya tathāgat<u>ātmabhāvavigraha</u>syaiko mahāratnastūpaḥ kartavyaḥ |

Monks, after my parinirvāṇa, one great jewelled stūpa should be made for this <u>body-frame</u> of the Tathāgata.

The Kashgar text has:[175]

[169] T. 262 (IX) 31b28-29 (*juan* 4).

[170] In this regard, too, one might want to give serious attention to a passage in the recently published Sanskrit text of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* (XII §5 = MS 71b6, Study Group on Buddhist Sanskrit Literature 2004: 472), in which we find the following: *parinirvṛtānāṁ ca teṣāṁ tathāgatānām ekaikasya tathāgatasya pūjākarmaṇe ekaghanasyādhikopitasya śarīrasya sarvaratnamayaṁ stūpaṁ pratiṣṭhāpayec* ..., corresponding to Kumārajīva's (T. 475 [XIV] 556a21-22 [*juan xia*]) 至諸佛滅後、以一一全身舍利起七寶塔. (As Skilling 2005: 300 ably demonstrates, for *adhikopita* one must read the graphically very similar *avikopita*.)

[171] T. 263 (IX) 101b20-21 (*juan* 6). Dharmarakṣa is not the only one to interpret this passage in such a way. See for example Kubo 1987: 293, 302, and Iwamoto in Sakamoto and Iwamoto 1964: 155. We note that the canonical Tibetan translation also makes a hash of the passage by failing to distinguish between the two uses of *śarīra* in any way at all. It reads (Nakamura 1976-: 231 = Peking 100a1):

der <u>de bzhin gshegs pa'i sku gdungs</u> nges par gzhag mi dgos so | | *de ci'i phyir zhe na* | *der <u>de bzhin gshegs pa'i sku gdung</u> gcig tu 'dus pa gzhag par 'gyur ba'i phyir ro* | |

On the Tibetan translations of *śarīra* vocabulary, see Schopen 1992: 227-228, n. 38. With regard particularly to the term *ring bsrel*, see Walter 1998.

[172] Karashima in his glossary of Dharmarakṣa's translation (1998: 385, s.v. 舍利 shè lì) defines *shèlì* as "relics, human remains," but makes no comment about these two terms, apparently not treating them as compounds. See also Karashima's glossary of Kumārajīva's translation (2001: 229), in which *shèlì* is perhaps less justifably again glossed also with "human remains." If this English term is taken to signify the uncremated body, since *shèlì* does not appear to have this meaning anywhere in Kumārajīva's translation, this definition is not apt.

[173] Although perhaps not without exception, in the overwhelming majority of cases Dharmarakṣa uses *fó* to render *buddha*, and *rúlái* for *tathāgata*. How he may have understood the different underlying valences of these two terms is, of course, a different question. In this particular case, as Jan Nattier suggests, it may be that he distinguishes between the one and two character terms in order to preserve the phrases' four character rhythm.

[174] Kern and Nanjio 1908-1912: 241.6-7. See too Toda 1985: 6; 1989: 6; 1992: 159-162, and Toda and Matsuda 1991: 27. A Gilgit manuscript (Watanabe 1975: 234, group B) agrees with the text in Kern-Nanjio.

For the word *vigraha*, see Additional Note 5.

[175] Toda 1981: 118 = 229a5-7.

(52)
mama bhikṣavaḥ parinirvṛtasyāsyemasya tathāgatasy' ātmabhāvavigrahasyaika-ghanasyaikamahāratnastūpaṁ kartavyaṁ.

Kumārajīva's rendering, which may reflect something of Kashgar's *ekaghana*, runs as follows:[176]

(53)
我滅度後、欲供養我全身者、應起一大塔。

After my demise, those who wish to worship my complete body (*quánshēn*) should erect a great stūpa.

Dharmarakṣa here is also clear, despite his use of two separate terms for body:[177]

(54)
吾滅度後、奉如來身、全取其體一等完具、興大塔寺。

After my demise, honoring the Tathāgata's body (*rúlái-shēn*), completely take his body (*tǐ*) entirely and thoroughly, and raise a great stūpa-temple [for it].

We begin to sense some strain, however, in the rendering of an immediately following passage: [178]

(55)
ayaṁ mama stūpo* daśasu dikṣu sarvalokadhātuṣu yeṣu buddhakṣetreṣv ayaṁ saddharmapuṇḍarīko dharmaparyāyaḥ saṁprakāśyeta teṣu teṣv ayaṁ mamātma-bhāvavigrahastūpaḥ samabhyudgacchet। tais tair buddhair bhagavadbhir asmin saddharmapuṇḍarīke dharmaparyāye bhāṣyamāṇe parṣanmaṇḍalasyopari vaihāyasaṁ tiṣṭhet। teṣāṁ ca buddhānāṁ bhagavatām imaṁ saddharmapuṇḍarīkaṁ dharmaparyāyaṁ bhāṣamāṇānām ayaṁ mamātmabhāvavigrahastūpaḥ sādhukāraṁ dadyāt।
* Gilgit: *ratnastūpo* = both Chinese translations!

[176] T. 262 (IX) 32c15-16 (*juan* 4).

[177] T. 263 (IX) 102c21-22 (*juan* 6). See Karashima 1992: 147. As Karashima notes, this agrees with the Kashgar text rather than the Nepalese text edited in Kern-Nanjio.

[178] Kern and Nanjio 1908-1912: 241.8-12; Toda 1989: 6-7; 1992: 162-166; Toda and Matsuda 1991: 27. Fragmentary in Gilgit, Watanabe 1975: 234. The first part of the passage is discussed in Tsukamoto 1976: 52.

Let this stūpa of mine, this stūpa of my body-frame (*ātmabhāva-vigraha*), arise wherever in the Buddha fields of all the world-systems of the ten directions this discourse on doctrine, the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, is expounded. Let it remain suspended in the sky above the assembly when this discourse on doctrine, the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, is being preached by any Buddha, Blessed One, and may this stūpa of my body-frame (*ātmabhāva-vigraha*) offer congratulations to those Buddhas, Blessed Ones, who are preaching this discourse on doctrine, the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*.

In contrast to this passage as transmitted in the Nepalese manuscript tradition, the Kashgar text here is interestingly different:[179]

(56)
idaṁ mama stūpaṁ daśasu dikṣu sarvalokadhātuṣu sarvabuddhakṣetreṣu abhy-udgacchet yatra yatra lokadhāto yo yas tathāgata imaṁ saddharmapuṇḍarīkaṁ dharmaparyāyaṁ saṁprakāśyet tatra tatra lokadhāto imaṁ mamātmabhāvavigraha-śarīrastūpaṁ parṣanmaṇḍalamadhyād abhyudgacchet tatra ca tasya tathāgatasyā-grata upari vaihāyase 'ntarīkṣe tiṣṭat [*sic*] eṣa ca mama śarīravigraho 'bhyantara stūpe sthitas teṣāṁ teṣāṁ buddhānāṁ bhagavatāṁ imaṁ dharmaparyāyaṁ bhāṣamāṇānām sādhukāraṁ vadet ।

Let this stūpa of mine arise in all the Buddha fields of all the world-systems of the ten directions. May this stūpa of the body/relics of my body-frame (*ātmabhāva-vigraha-śarīra*)[180] arise from amidst the assembly in whatever world-system some Tathāgata expounds this discourse on doctrine, the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*. And let it remain suspended there in the sky above that Tathāgata. And may my body-frame (*śarīra-vigraha*) fixed within the stūpa offer congratulations to those Buddhas, Blessed Ones, who are preaching this discourse on doctrine.

It is not really quite clear how the introduction of *śarīra* vocabulary into the Kashgar text changes its meaning,[181] and we note particularly that *ātmabhāva-vigraha-śarīra* and *śarīra-vigraha* appear to be used basically synonomously, and are probably also synonymous with *ātmabhāva-vigraha*. Kumārajīva has this passage as follows:[182]

[179] Toda 1981: 118 = 229b1-7. See the remarks of Kajiyama 2001: 8-9.

[180] Or appositionally: "body-frame, that is, body"?

[181] By using the term "introduction," I do not mean to imply that this text has added anything to a context which previously lacked it; the distinction is merely relative and contrastive.

[182] T. 262 (IX) 32c16-18 (*juan* 4).

(57)
其佛以神通願力、十方世界在在處處、若有説法華經者、彼之寶塔皆踊出其前、全身在於塔中、讃言、善哉、善哉。

Watson translates:[183]

That Buddha, through his transcendental powers and the power of his vow, ensures that, throughout the worlds in the ten directions, no matter in what place, if there are those who preach the Lotus Sutra, this treasure tower will in all cases come forth and appear in their presence, and his complete body will be in the tower, speaking words of praise and saying, Excellent, excellent!

While Kumārajīva then seems to pay no particular attention (or give no special treatment) to the terms we have highlighted, Dharmarakṣa's rendering of the same section of text reads as follows:[184]

(58)
十方世界其有議説此法華經、吾七寶塔踊現諸佛所説經處。其舍利身在七寶塔、讃言、善哉。

In the worlds of the ten directions, if there is someone who preaches this Lotus Sūtra, my seven-jewelled stūpa will appear at the place where the Buddhas preach the sūtra. That [or: his] *shèlì*-body (*shèlì-shēn*) in the seven-jewelled stūpa will speak praise saying: Excellent!

Karashima in his glossary of Dharmarakṣa's translation defines the term *shèlì-shēn* 舍利身 ("*shèlì*-body") in this passage simply as "the body."[185] While we certainly cannot criticize this gloss, in fact it is very difficult to understand the intention of the expression with any certainty. It does seem, nevertheless, that if we were to assume there to have been some form of *śarīra* in the Vorlage from which Kumārajīva worked, as almost certainly there was in Dharmarakṣa's, something which seems not unlikely given the overall proximity of Kumārajīva's translation to the Kashgar recension,[186] Dharmarakṣa would

[183] Watson 1993: 172.

[184] T. 263 (IX) 102c24-26 (*juan* 6).

[185] Karashima 1998: 385, s.v. shè lì shēn.

[186] On this point, see Karashima's conclusion (1992: 261) that "it can be assumed that the Central Asian MSS. [including Kashgar] and the underlying texts of [Dharmarakṣa's translation] and [Kumārajīva's translation] may have stemmed from a common version, which must have

here again appear to have been more sensitive to the possible importance of this particular word, even if the translation that results cannot, once more, be called a complete success. Dharmarakṣa's translation *shèlì-shēn*, however we understand this compound, has the merit of drawing attention to the special nature of the vocabulary with which the body/relics of the Buddha is/are referred to here, something palpably absent from Kumārajīva's perhaps more straighforward rendering.

We have already noticed above the compound *shēn-shèlì* used by both Zhi Qian and Zhu Fonian, following Lokakṣema's original use, and here we have just seen Dharmarakṣa's employment of its, probably synonymous, inversion, *shèlì-shēn*. It is difficult to know whether, and if so how, either or both of these terms are related to the word *quánshēn-shèlì*, "whole-body-*shèlì*," which occurs in Kumārajīva's Chinese translation of the Lotus Sūtra, in the context of a passage which reads in Sanskrit as follows:[187]

(59)
devarājasya khalu punar bhikṣavas tathāgatasya parinirvṛtasya viṁśaty antarakalpān saddharmaḥ sthāsyati | na ca śarīraṁ dhātubhedena bhetsyate | ekaghanaṁ cāsya śarīraṁ bhaviṣyati saptaratnastūpaṁ praviṣṭam |

And moreover, monks, after the parinirvāṇa of the Tathāgata Devarāja the True Teaching shall remain for twenty intermediate aeons. But his body (*śarīra*) will not dissolve by breaking into relics (*dhātu*). Rather, his body (*śarīra*) will become one single mass, set inside a stūpa of the seven jewels.

Kumārajīva renders this (or whatever reading he found in the Vorlage from which he worked) in an abbreviated way:[188]

(60)
時天王佛般涅槃後、正法住世二十中劫。全身舍利起七寶塔。

After the parinirvāṇa of Devarāja Buddha, the True Teaching will persist in the world for twenty intermediate aeons. [For his] whole-body-*shèlì* (*quánshēn-shèlì*) a seven-jewelled stūpa will be erected.

differed from the original version of the Nepalese-Gilgit MSS."

[187] Kern and Nanjio 1908-1912: 259.13-15. Both the Kashgar (Toda 1981: 127 = 249b1-3) and Gilgit (Watanabe 1975: 242.3-5) text are almost identical. The passage has been misunderstood by Iwamoto in Sakamoto and Iwamoto 1964: 211.

[188] T. 262 (IX) 35a8-9 (*juan* 4). Again, my use of "abbreviated" is intended as merely contrastive, and not to suggest anything about the content of the Vorlage from which Kumārajīva worked.

Despite the rendering I have given it above, it is difficult to know whether we should understand this Chinese term *quánshēn-shèlì* 全身舍利 as "the relics of his whole body," or "the whole relics of his body," or even in another way entirely, for example "the whole body-which-is-as-a-relic," or as perhaps suggested by Haribhadra's interpretation of *ātmabhāva-śarīra* in the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* noted above, and our subsequent appositional interpretation of the term *shēn-shèlì*, "whole *shèlì*, which is to say, whole body." Here Dharmarakṣa offers a rendering which once again in a literal sense conforms more closely than does Kumārajīva's to the extant Sanskrit text:[189]

(61)
滅度之後、正法當住二十中劫。不散<u>身骨</u>、合<u>全舍利</u>、起七寶塔。

After his demise, the True Teaching will persist for twenty intermediate aeons. Not dispersing [his] <u>body-bones</u> (*shēngŭ*), and gathering the <u>whole *shèlì*</u> (*quánshèlì*) [someone] will erect a seven-jewelled stūpa.

As we noticed above, the evidence of its usage in a number of texts strongly suggests that the word *shēngŭ* is normally to be understood as "relics." But it is very difficult to grasp precisely what Dharmarakṣa may have intended here by his use of the term, although he may be attempting (among other things) to distinguish between his treatments of *śarīra* and of *dhātu*, respectively. The problems with this passage are complex. Let us take another look at a portion of the Sanskrit text we just quoted (§**59**):

na ca śarīraṁ dhātubhedena bhetsyate | ekaghanaṁ cāsya śarīraṁ bhaviṣyati

It seems to be fairly clear that the first instance of singular *śarīra* here means "body" in the sense of corpse, most importantly because it is distinguished from *dhātu*, which certainly here means "relics." But what of the second case of the singular *śarīra*, that which is "one single mass"? While it may certainly also mean "body," is it possible that we should understand it also somehow in the sense of "relic(s)," as Dharmarakṣa's translation suggests? If so, what would the passage be saying? An answer to such a question may remove us thoroughly from the realm of philology, so let us for the moment return instead to the problem at hand, approaching it from another point of view. Recalling Schopen's suggestion that in the Pāli *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* one can see the transition

[189] T. 263 (IX) 105c1-2 (*juan* 6). Note also the version in the perhaps late third or early fourth century anonymous translation *Satan fentuoli jing* 薩曇分陀利經 (T. 265 [IX] 197b24-25): 天王佛般泥洹後、不散舍利、起作一七寶塔.

from *śarīra* as body to *śarīrāni* as relics with the grammatical shift from singular to plural, we may now want to ask whether it is ever possible for *śarīra* not only in the plural but even in the grammatical singular to also mean "relic(s)."

We find an important example in a passage printed as follows in Kern and Nanjio's edition of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*:[190]

(62)
kṛtā me tenājita kulaputreṇa vā kuladuhitrā vā <u>śarīreṣu śarīrapūjā</u> saptaratnamayāś ca stūpāḥ kāritā

This in and of itself would suggest an understanding along the lines of the following, in an overly literal rendering:

The <u>worship of the relics</u> is done <u>on the relics</u> for me, Ajita, by that gentle son or gentle daughter, and stūpas of the seven jewels are built [by the same son or daughter].

A simple transfer of the principle argued for by Schopen in regard to the Nikāya/Āgama-Vinaya literature would suggest that the plural *śarīreṣu* here indicates that the compound *śarīra-pūjā* is to be understood as referring explicitly to rites performed on, or with respect to, plural relics. But these things may be rather less obvious than they at first appear.

While Kern's note informs us that all his manuscripts save one read *śarīre* for *śarīreṣu*, the singular for the plural locative, we now know that the textual tradition here is more complicated, and the text Kern printed a serious conflation of diverse sources. The Nepalese manuscripts are unanimous in presenting the singular reading. One representative Nepalese manuscript tradition has the following:[191]

(63)
kṛtā me tenājita kulaputreṇa vā kuladuhitrā vā <u>śarīre śarīrapūjāḥ</u> saptaratnamayāś ca stūpāḥ kāritā

This text tradition, then, presents us with the same apparently singular locative *śarīre* which, as we noticed above, Schopen in the context of the

[190] Kern and Nanjio 1908-1912: 338.7-8. The Gilgit manuscript shares this reading, Watanabe 1975: 124.28-29. See Tsukamoto 1976: 60-62, without any note of the manuscript variants.

[191] See Toda 1995: 96-99, manuscripts K, C5, C6, T2, T6, N2 (with variants in the ordering of *tenājita*). Manuscripts C4, N1, and Pe have instead of *śarīre śarīrapūjā* rather simply *śarīrapūjā*, and N3 and T8 read *śarīre pūjā*.

Mahāparinibbāna-sutta had suggested indicates that the object of *śarīra-pūjā* is a corpse, rather than relics.[192] Such an understanding seems quite impossible here, however. In addition, the single manuscript referred to by Kern as having the plural reading, what is now generally known as the Kashgar manuscript, reads here:[193]

(64)
kṛta[194] me tebhir ajita kulaputrebhiḥ kuladuhitṛbhiś ca tathāgataśarīreṣu śarīrapūjā bhavati | saptaratnamayāni ca stūpāni kṛtāni bhavanti

The worship of the relics is done on the relics of the Tathāgata for me, Ajita, by those gentle sons and gentle daughters, and stūpas of the seven jewels are made [by them].

In this text, the entire expression (including the gentle sons and daughters) is cast in the plural. Kumārajīva's translation has corresponding to this:[195]

(65)
是善男子善女人 … 爲以佛舍利、起七寶塔。

This gentle son and/or gentle daughter … will erect a seven-jeweled stūpa for/with the Buddha's *shèlì*.

Dharmarakṣa has:[196]

(66)
是等族姓子 … 起七寶寺 … 悉爲供養一切舍利。

Those noble sons … will erect a seven-jeweled temple … in order to worship all the *shèlì*.

[192] However, in the context of a Vinaya passage extant only in Tibetan and Chinese, but not Sanskrit, Schopen 1994: 49-50 appears, without explicitly saying so, to accept that the singular *śarīre śarīrapūjā* must mean "the honor due to relics for … relics." There appear to be a number of other passages, in Sanskrit, in which this is also the case. I thank Klaus Wille for bringing several examples to my attention.

[193] Toda 1981: 161 (325a5-7).

[194] So the manuscript (as Seishi Karashima tells me) and the edition; read kṛtā.

[195] T. 262 (IX) 45b27, 29 (*juan* 5).

[196] T. 263 (IX) 117a13-14 (*juan* 8).

Both of these translations suggest that their respective translators understood *śarīra* here to refer to relics, *shèlì*, and their worship, something which the context also demands. Of course, while we cannot be certain what readings were found in their Indic exemplars, as noted above there is significant evidence that Kumārajīva's text was much more similar to that preserved in the Kashgar manuscript than to the Nepalese recension. This may also contribute to explaining these renderings, with which the understandings of modern interpreters basically agree,[197] despite the fact that the grammar of the Nepalese manuscripts does not appear to support such an understanding. Once again, however, and without intending to dismiss the possibility of corruption in the Nepalese manuscript tradition,[198] it is far from impossible that the difference between singular and plural forms of *śarīra* in this particular context is doctrinal or ritual, rather than grammatical, and points, for instance, to differing conceptions of the eternal body of the Buddha, rather than to any difference between body and relics, much less between funeral and relic (or stūpa) worship.

At the outset of our study we stated without qualification that *śarīra* in the singular means "body," and in the plural "relics" (while of course allowing for the possibility of plural bodies as well). It might shed some light on the translations we have seen to recognize that *śarīra* in the grammatical singular may indeed be used in the sense of "relic(s)," or alternatively that the *Saddharma-*

[197] Burnouf 1852: 205 translated: "C'est que ce fils ou cette fille de famille, ô toi qui es invincible, a rendu à mes reliques le culte que l'on doit aux reliques du Buddha, qu'il a fait des Stûpas formés des sept substances précieuses." This is peculiar since Burnouf translated directly from a Nepalese manuscript (now known as P3 or Pc, still unpublished) which had the reading *śarīre śarīrapūjā*,* and he could have had absolutely no knowledge of the then as yet undiscovered Kashgar text (obtained only in 1903). Matsunami et al. 1976: 128, apparently translating the text of the Kern-Nanjio edition, have: "その良家の息子あるいは娘は、すでに私の遺骨(舎利)に遺骨供養を行ったことになり、…." Iwamoto in Sakamoto and Iwamoto 1967: 59 apparently also renders the same with: "良家の子女は、余の遺骨の礼拝のために…." All of these versions appear to be predicated on an understanding of *śarīra* as a plural; if the latter two read Kern-Nanjio as printed, this is understandable. However, note also that the translation of Nanjō and Izumi 1913: 378, despite being based on Nanjō's draft edition, which certainly contained a singular reading, has the following: 阿逸多よかかる善家男子若くは善家女子は予が舎利を供養せんがために七寶合成の塔を作れるなり, speaking once again of relic worship.

* Although his notes take into account other manuscripts, Burnouf's translation is of P3 alone; see Yuyama 2000: 63-64. Earlier indications, including Yuyama's own (1970: 16), are in error on this point. Although portions of P3 have been transcribed, that corresponding to the passage in question here has not, nor has any facsimile yet appeared. However, Seishi Karashima kindly informs me that P3 in fact reads (180b6) *śarīre śarīrapūjā*.

[198] It is theoretically possible that the akṣara *-ṣu* could have dropped out of some archetype of the Nepalese manuscripts, converting the reading *śarīreṣu* into *śarīre*. But for reasons which will become clear below, I consider this possibility to be almost nil.

puṇḍarīka is using the word in a special way. When we pose the question in this way, however, we begin to notice that it is not only the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* which appears to present such otherwise apparently curious usages. There are examples in several passages of the *Pañcaviṁśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, for instance, of the singular *śarīra* which must be understood in something other than the simple sense of "(dead) body."[199] One passage in particular is very instructive. The Nepalese text reads as follows:[200]

(67)
yaś ca tathāgatasyārhataḥ samyaksambuddhasya parinirvṛtasya śarīrāṇi stūpeṣu pratiṣṭhāpayiṣyati ....

And one who will cause (the) relics of a deceased Tathāgata, Arhat, Complete and Perfect Buddha to be established in stūpas ....

It appears that the plural *śarīrāṇi* here quite straightforwardly means "relics." However, we must pay particular attention to the fact that the indirect object here, *stūpeṣu*, is also in the plural, and so there is nothing to prevent us from understanding the text to mean that for each single stūpa a single relic (or single *śarīra*, whatever we may determine this to mean) is (distributively) to be established, although the text makes no effort to say this explicitly. However, a corresponding Gilgit manuscript has the same passage as follows:[201]

(68)
yaś ca tathāgatasyārhataḥ samyaksambuddhasya parinirvṛtasya śarīraṁ pratiṣṭhāpayet ....

And one who would cause the/a relic/body of a deceased Tathāgata, Arhat, Complete and Perfect Buddha to be established ....

Here we have the singular *śarīraṁ* in the place of the plural *śarīrāṇi* of the Nepalese manuscripts, and there is no explicit reference to stūpas. The Chinese

[199] Watanabe 1989: 166.6 (where however the syntax is not very clear to me), translated Conze 1975: 555, and see T. 220 (VII) 358c16 (*juan* 466); T. 223 (VIII) 386c2 (*juan* 23). Watanabe 1991: 123.17 (*parinirvṛtasya ca śarīre pūjā pravarttate*), translated Conze 1975: 560, and see T. 220 (VII) 361c9 (*juan* 467); T. 223 (VIII) 388b25 (*juan* 23). All the Chinese translations seem to confirm the interpretation as "relics" by "translating" with *shèlì* 舍利 or *shèlìluó* 設利羅. (Earlier Conze 1967: 379, s.v. śarīra had been more sensitive to the grammar than to context, referring to the first passage listed here with the gloss "dead body.")

[200] Kimura 1986: 56.27-29.

[201] Quoted from Schopen 1977: 143.

translations agree in seeing the reference here not to "body" but to *shèlì*, to be taken—provisionally—as "(a) relic(s)."[202] How precisely this should be understood, and why *śarīra* is used in Sanskrit in the Gilgit text in the singular, remains unclear. However, in another example of almost the same construction, both the Gilgit and Nepalese traditions (identical save for Gilgit's omission of *kulaputro vā kuladuhitā vā*) agree in having *śarīra* in the singular:[203]

(69)
yaḥ kaścit kauśika kulaputro vā kuladuhitā vā tathāgatasya parinirvṛtasya saptaratnamaye stūpe śarīraṁ pratiṣṭhāpayet ....

Whatever gentle son or gentle daughter, Kauśika, after the death of the Tathāgata would cause his relic/body[204] to be established in a stūpa made of the seven jewels ....

Again, the Chinese translations agree in seeing here *shèlì*, not (or, with caution we might say: at least not explicitly) a body.[205] We also have at least one example in the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* of *śarīra* in the singular where an interpretation as "relics" seems the only one possible, as it has indeed been understood not only by modern interpreters, but by Chinese translators as well:[206]

(70)
yaḥ kulaputro vā kuladuhitā vā tathāgatasya parinirvṛtasya śarīraṁ satkṛtya paricared dhārayet ... svayam eva yo vānyaḥ kulaputro vā kuladuhitā vā tathāgataśarīraṁ svayaṁ ca satkuryād gurukuryān ... parebhyaś ca vistareṇa samprakāśayed dadyāt saṁvibhajed vaistārikī pūjā bhaviṣyatīti sattvānāṁ cānukampām upādāya ...

[On the one hand] that gentle son or daughter who having worshipped would serve, uphold [and so on] ... the relic after the death of the Tathāgata [or: relic of the deceased Tathāgata] entirely unaided, or [on the other hand] that gentle son or daughter who would worship, honor ... the relic of the Tathāgata unaided, and widely preach about it to others, donate and distribute it, thinking that its worship

[202] T. 220 (VII) 152a20-21 (*juan* 428); T. 221 (VIII) 46b1-2 (*juan* 7); T. 223 (VIII) 283c14 (*juan* 9).

[203] Kimura 1986: 58.1-2; Schopen 1977: 146.

[204] Or: "the/a relic/body of the deceased Tathāgata," which amounts to the same thing.

[205] T. 220 (VII) 152c4-5 (*juan* 428); T. 221 (VIII) 46b20 (*juan* 7); T. 223 (VIII) 284a9-10 (*juan* 9).

[206] Wogihara 1932-1935: 286.19, 22, 287.3 (Mitra 103); Conze 1973: 120; Kajiyama 1974: 139-140. T. 224 (VIII) 436b25-28 (*juan* 2); T. 226 (VIII) 518b10, 13 (*juan* 2); T. 227 (VIII) 546a7 (*juan* 2).

will [thus] become widespread, and out of compassion for beings ... (which is better?).

That the approximately ninth century commentator Haribhadra glosses the word *śarīra* in the scripture here as "image(s) and so on"[207] is a potentially significant clue to one understanding of the term in a medieval doctrinal or ritual framework, although what it may say about how the sūtra itself would have been earlier understood (in India, or by Chinese translators) is perhaps a different matter. Although the compound term *tathāgataśarīra* in the sūtra is grammatically singular, the gentle son or gentle daughter to whom the text is addressed is advised not only to pay reverence to this object, but to donate and distribute it to others (*parebhyaḥ ... dadyāt saṁvibhajet*), suggesting that however *śarīra* was understood, it was seen to be divisible, and therefore multiple. Whether this points to objects appearing as the result of cremation, bones and so on, to images, or to something else, it nevertheless can hardly indicate one indivisible object, since a single thing cannot, by definition, be distributed.

We have, then, a number of examples of grammatically singular uses of Indic *śarīra* in which the meaning cannot be simply "body." Such examples could in fact be fairly easily multiplied, and are to be found even in Pāli works such as the late thirteenth century *Thūpavaṁsa*.[208] Moreover, another indication that some of the responsibility for failing to appreciate the full range of signification of this terminology lies with the modern interpreter occurs in a number of Indian Buddhist inscriptions recording relic deposits, in which yet again the term *śarīra* can, although it does not commonly, appear in the singular.[209]

What emerges, probably although not absolutely certainly, from the inscriptional evidence, is that, as in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* and elsewhere, the real issue in interpretation of uses of *śarīra* may be less one of a grammatically or lexically ambiguous or unclear text than one of the modern scholar's understanding and appreciation of what the authors of these texts thought they were doing.[210] Did these authors understand that the "relic casket" contained "relics"?

[207] Wogihara 1932-1935: 287.8: *pratimādika*.

[208] See the expression (Jayawickrama 1971: 172.24-25; cp. his trans. p. 34): *dīghāyukabuddhānaṁ hi sarīraṁ suvaṇṇakkhandhasadisaṁ ekaghanam eva hoti*: "The body/relics of long-lived Buddhas are of a single mass, like a clump of gold." This also reminds us of the use of *ekaghana* in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*. (Skilling 2005: 294-295 cites a number of additional Pāli examples of almost literally the same wording. He makes no comment about the grammatically singular *sarīra*, however.)

[209] See Additional Note 6.

[210] I am indebted to Gregory Schopen for casting doubt on my naive reading of these inscriptions.

Or was it rather something closer to the idea that it, somehow, contained the "whole body" of the Buddha, or even the/a living Buddha himself, as seems to be implied in some passages of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* when similar formulations are used?

Might these authors indeed precisely be saying that the "relic casket" contains within it a visible, tangible embodiment of awakening? This in fact comes very close, if it is not indeed identical, to what some scholars see happening in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*. Sadahiko Kariya sees the situation as follows:[211]

> The word *śarīra* has the meaning of the "relic" (*shari*) of stūpa and relic worship overflowing with religious life newly resurrected by the Lotus Sūtra. To go on further, although we say "relics," it goes beyond the material limitations of the Buddha's bones, in fact has nothing to do with the existence of such bones, but should rather be understood as an attempt to express what can only be seen in the teaching of the Lotus Sūtra, the eternally living Buddha who possesses a lovely flesh and blood body within the stūpa. ... In contrast to this, *dhātu* has the sense of the bones of the Buddha, the relics as the object of future stūpa and relic worship.

Although Kariya's aim is to argue for the distinction he sees between intentional deployments of theologically distinct *śarīra* and *dhātu*, the latter representing the superseded stūpa and relic worship of the defunct pre-Lotus Sūtra Buddhism and the former pointing to the eternally vital Buddha revealed in that scripture, we do not necessarily have to accept Kariya's overall point to agree with him that *śarīra* is being used in this text to mean much more than simple bodily relics—dry bones. In fact, as I have suggested, the word *śarīra* is intentionally used by the authors of the Lotus precisely because of this ambiguity or, better, rich multivalency and semantic potency in the term. Again, our problems in understanding the term's precise meaning may be less grammatical or philological than conceptual and doctrinal. But even granting this in the case of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, how might this complexity relate to our struggles with Chinese translations of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*?

[211] Kariya 1965: 178.

Inconclusive Concluding Thoughts

We cannot entirely solve the complex questions regarding the overall interpretation of the term *śarīra* and all its associated concepts here. Rather, what we should do in conclusion is return our attention to our two basic problems: First is the question of what Zhi Qian, Bo Fazu, and above all Buddhayaśas and Zhu Fonian, thought they were doing when they used the term *shèlì* in their translations of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* to refer to the uncremated body of the Buddha. Second is the problem of whether and how such a rendering could have been understood by an audience otherwise unfamiliar with the overall account of the funeral of the Buddha. And in this regard, the additional materials to which we have drawn attention, including passages in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* and elsewhere, might help point us toward at least part of an answer. If, as examples from these sources suggest, the grammatical form of the word *śarīra* is not, after all, a sure guide to its referent, if *śarīra* in the singular may, like its plural form, also be understood as "relics," or at least to signify something other than the simple "body," then three possibilities suggest themselves. First, this lack of regular correspondence between the grammatical form of the word *śarīra* and its intended referent could suggest that translators beginning with Zhi Qian, and including Buddhayaśas and Zhu Fonian, did not always clearly understand what specific sense of *śarīra* was intended in a given passage. It is possible, in other words, that they mistook what in the Indic text was intended to refer to a body or corpse to mean instead relic, therefore rendering with *shèlì* what should have been expressed in Chinese with *shēn* or other simple body terms. Such a misunderstanding of the Indian source text, however, seems distinctly unlikely, especially in light of the fact that the contexts in which we find *shèlì* used to mean "body" are almost always quite clear. This very clarity of context suggests that any possible ambiguity introduced by confusions about the grammatical number of *śarīra* in Indic (something which even in and of itself is not very likely to have occurred) is most unlikely to have been a factor in the choice of *shèlì* as a Chinese translation equivalent.

A second possibility is related to what we can see as the apparently fully intentional polysemy in the Indic sources. We have seen that some Mahāyāna sources in particular attempt to convey layers or levels of meaning through self-conscious manipulation of the term *śarīra*. It is conceivable, then, that the Chinese translators, who were clearly familiar with at least some of this Mahāyāna literature and ideology, saw in *śarīra* language—even in non-Mahāyāna contexts—a deeper, richer and more complex significance than a mere discussion of the disposition of a corpse would suggest. They therefore chose to signal this complexity with a correspondingly marked and unusual Chinese vocabulary.

There is certainly something to be said for this possibility, particularly since these translators could only have seen all scriptures as equally revealing the word of the Buddha, and therefore in this respect not to be treated any differently. This possibility is probably not mutually exclusive from the third conceivable explanation. Namely, the Chinese translators may well have been, even if not fully or successfully, trying to forge a special Chinese technical vocabulary through which they could refer to the special, extraordinary body of the Buddha (not in any way necessarily connected with any particular Mahāyāna ideas). The translations we noted, from Zhi Qian, Bo Fazu, and particularly and most fully Buddhayaśas and Zhu Fonian, may contain traces of a failed—because not subsequently imitated, or perhaps even fully recognized—attempt to forge a specific technical terminology with which to speak of the body of the Buddha, perhaps most especially in the religiously potent moment of his passing into nirvāṇa. This is not entirely distinct from the second possibility mooted above, because the developing Buddhology of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, for instance, certainly (also) represents an effort to reinterpret the very status of the Buddha, and consequently distance him from ordinary humanity.

The question of the nature of the Buddha arises in an immediate and pressing manner precisely upon his death because there, like nowhere else in the narrative parade of his life, the very most basic status of his existence suddenly becomes unavoidably unclear. Asking what the Buddha becomes upon death correspondingly implies the question of what he was, how he existed, before death. This appears to be precisely the question which led the authors of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* to develop their ideas of the eternality of the Buddha. Of course, the background to this idea is very much more complex than a simple apparent conflict between physical (saṁsāric) existence and the non-existence of nirvāṇa. But the fact remains that the questions which, I believe, pressed upon Zhi Qian, Zhu Fonian and others are part of a larger tension in Buddhism, that concerning the very existence of the Buddha himself, and ultimately the possibility of his continued and continuing salvific activity in our world. For if the Buddha is well and truly gone, how can he help us? But if he is not gone, how did he ever exist, apparently like us? A great deal of Buddhist thinking can be understood as more or less direct attempts to address this basic question.

But all of these theological rationalizations do not erase one remaining problem. Even if we are able to hypothesize something of the motivation which may have led to the vocabulary choices we observe in the translations we have studied, what is most difficult about the particular instances we have examined from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* is not the mere use of *shèlì* in the sense of "body," which may, as we have seen, potentially be explained in a variety of ways. Rather, it is the use of this term to denote *both* "body" and

"relics" within one and the same narrative sequence. We are still left, after all our investigations, with the question of what readers without direct access to Indic sources—which is to say, all Chinese readers—might have made of the accounts of the funeral procedures for the Buddha in Buddhayaśas's *Dīrghāgama* and Dharmaguptaka Vinaya translations. Contextually, such readers could have guessed what might have been meant,[212] but how would they have understood it?

This question of contemporary understanding is further complicated by the fact that in fourth century China, cremation of the dead was almost entirely unknown. Even if it is not entirely true that the Chinese believed in the necessity of maintaining the postmortem integrity of the physical body,[213] they certainly did not consider consignment to the flames a fitting disposition of the corpse. According to Anna Seidel,[214] "Cremation spread among monks from the fifth century attaining, at the end of the Tang, such popularity that even the laity practiced it in great numbers." Yet Daoxuan writing in the seventh century could say that although forest exposure of the corpse and burial were practiced in China, "there are few signs of exposure in rivers and cremation."[215] Cremation becomes common only in the Song. This earlier unfamiliarity with cremation even among monks may have been yet another obstacle to an accurate understanding and appreciation of the episode of the Buddha's funerary rites depicted in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*.

Let us ask another question: how would Chinese readers have grasped the intent behind the unusual use of vocabulary we have seen in the translations under review (assuming there was some such special intent to begin with)? Something of the difficulty even traditionally knowledgeable readers may have had in comprehending this terminology became evident in our survey of the works of Chinese Buddhist lexicographers. That survey demonstrated that at least in the particular case of *shèlì*, even these specialists in the technical terminology of Buddhist translations, writing some centuries after the earliest translations, were frequently not sure how to understand the vocabulary of

212 Thus the case of *shèlì* is considerably different from that of translations which may in their entirety be almost completely incomprehensible. See for example the remarks of Nagao 1994: xiii regarding Buddhaśānta's Chinese translation of the *Mahāyānasaṁgraha*, in which large blocks of text are almost totally incoherent.

213 As Brown 2002 suggests.

214 Seidel 1983: 575a.

215 Liu 2000: 7, translating T. 2060 (L) 685b4-5 (*juan* 27): 東夏所伝惟聞林土。水火兩設世罕其蹤. Note that there are early (Han dynasty) Chinese references to (attempted) autocremation in the context of rain-making magic (see Schafer 1951: 138-1339), but although there are Buddhist examples, even these almost certainly have no connection to the present case.

certain passages. They were, to be sure, aware that *shèlì* might mean "body," but in the text passages to which they themselves pointed in support of this meaning, *shèlì* quite clearly, in almost all cases, means rather "relics" than "body." This leaves us in a peculiar spot. We can, on the one hand, imagine possible scenarios in which the translators' usage of *shèlì* in the sense of "corpse" was intentional and self-consciously motivated. These scenarios involve speculations of a theological nature, but are not for that less likely. There may very well have been "buddhological" motivations for an unusual yet specific choice of translation equivalents in a particularly charged religious context. What we still, despite our best efforts, have trouble imagining is how the passages in which this hypothesized special use of the term appears would or could have been understood by Chinese readers. How, we struggle to understand, could they have made sense of a passage which says that one take the Buddha's *shèlì*, burns it, and then collects and enshrines the Buddha's *shèlì*?

If any of what I have speculated here is correct, although Buddhayaśas and Zhu Fonian, perhaps initially inspired by Zhi Qian, would appear not to have been entirely consistent in their application of the word *shèlì*, the closest we may be able to come to appreciating their intentions is to see their renderings as evidence of an ultimately abandoned attempt to recognize and express in words some of the complex multivalency of evolving theological notions of the Buddha and his physical incarnation—an intersection of body language and *bodhi* language, as it were. If this is correct, the apparently odd and difficult translations we find in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtras* must be acknowledged as being themselves precious relics indeed.

Additional Notes

Additional Note 1
(to n. 46)

The Chinese version of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* we did not consider in the main body of this study is that contained in the *Kṣudrakavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, *Genben shuoyiqieyoubu pinaiye zashi* 根本説一切有部毘奈耶雜事, which was translated by Yijing 義淨 centuries later than the translations we did notice, in the year 710. In this version we find the following:[216]

> 時具壽阿難陀而白佛言、大德、世尊般涅槃後、我當云何恭敬①供養如來法身。佛告阿難陀、汝宜且止。汝所問事當有信心婆羅門長者等自爲施設。復白佛言、。諸長者等所有施設其事云何。佛言、一一皆如轉輪王②葬法。又問、転輪王法其事云何。佛言、汝今應知、轉輪聖王命終之後、以五百斤上妙疊絮以用纏③身上下、… 次灑香乳以滅炎火。方收王④骨安置金瓶、於四衢道興建大⑤塔。…

> At that time the Venerable Ānanda spoke to the Buddha, saying: "Venerable One, after the Blessed One's parinirvāṇa, how should I honor and worship the Tathāgata's dharma body (*fǎshēn*) ①?" The Buddha said to Ānanda: "You should stop this! What you ask about faithful brahmins and householders will prepare themselves." Again he asked the Buddha: "What are all these things that the householders will prepare?" The Buddha said: "Each and every one of them is like the procedures of the universal monarch's funeral (*zàng*) ②." Again he asked: "What are the procedures for the universal monarch?" The Buddha said: "You should know now that, after the death of a universal monarch, his body (*shēn*) ③ is bound up in 500 layers of fine cloth from top to bottom, and ... then fragrant milk is poured to extinguish the fire. At that point, taking the king's bones (*gǔ*) ④,[217] they are placed in a gold vessel, and a great *stūpa ⑤ is built at a crossroads. ...

As in the earlier translations, more or less precisely the same pattern is maintained here. A body is mentioned ①, Ānanda is instructed that he should not concern himself with its disposition, a funeral is performed ②, and after

[216] T. 1451 (XXIV) 394c19-395a3 (*juan* 37); trans. in Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 359-361.

[217] This agrees, as we might expect, with the Sanskrit *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*'s *asthi* (Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 360, §36.7).

the cremation what is left are bones ④. However, there are also interesting differences. The first reference to body here appears to be to the **dharma-kāya*, a term which is distinctly out of place in this passage, even (or especially) if it is taken in its simple and non-philosophical sense of "the body of teachings."[218] We may note that the same word appears several times in the text, in one instance of which it is explicitly contrasted with the *sèshēn* 色身, *rūpa-kāya*.[219] It is very unlikely that the compound form *fǎshēn* was chosen for metrical or prosodic reasons, since once again in the very same text Yijing repeatedly uses the two character compounds *shēntǐ* 身體 and *shēnxíng* 身形,[220] with every indication that they are simply synonymous with the single character *shēn* 身 itself. It remains a puzzling question what *fǎshēn* might mean here. To further emphasize the oddity of *fǎshēn* in this passage, when the text continues the "body" vocabulary is entirely normal, and agrees with other versions completely. This problem aside, due to the much later date of this translation in comparison with the versions central to our study, we may leave it out of further consideration.

Additional Note 2
(to n. 109)

It seems to me quite possible or even likely that Buddhayaśas did not know Chinese, despite the fact that it is with regard to him that the famous story is told of the test in which a foreign monk is made to quickly commit to memory census data and pharmaceutical recipes—apparently in Chinese—as a test of his ability to correctly recite memorized scriptures.[221] Buddhayaśas, originally from Jibin 罽賓 (see below), is said to have come to China, as I calculate from his hagiography, not before the age of 35, and he stayed only five years before his return to Jibin. If we assume that he did not know Chinese before his visit, it follows that it is extremely unlikely that his linguistic knowledge was sufficient for him to take any active part in the translation process above and beyond a recitation of the text and explanation in Sanskrit (or Prakrit).[222] The translation

[218] It is translated by Waldschmidt 1950-1951: 359 by "Gesetzeskörper," without any remark. Jan Nattier wonders if *fa* 法 is not just prosodic filler here. If so, it is, to say the least, potentially misleading.

[219] T. 1451 (XXIV) 225c1-6 (*juan* 5). See also 403c26, 404b5, 405a6 (*juan* 39).

[220] These compounds occur, respectively, at least 33 and 19 times each.

[221] See Shih 1968: 89, Tokiwa 1938: 880.

[222] Okayama 1984: 27 without elaboration states that all of the foreign monk-translators assisted by the Chinese Zhu Fonian, including Buddhayaśas, were ignorant of Chinese.

would nevertheless be attributed to him for political reasons, foreign scholars legitimizing Chinese translations of Buddhist scriptures irrespective of their actual participation in the translation process.[223]

Nishimura seems willing to credit the account, based primarily on the Preface to the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, that Buddhayaśas came not from Jibin but from Khotan (Yutian 于闐) which he connects, as I understand him, with his conclusion that the Vorlage of the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya was written in Gāndhārī.[224] Even if Nishimura is right about the latter point, his overall argument does not hold, since it is now clear that Jibin does not necessarily mean Kashmir, as Nishimura apparently thought. Rather, as Enomoto says: "we should safely conclude that Ji-bin found in the works of Chinese Buddhist monks between the 4th and 6th centuries indicated a wider area including Kashmir, Gandhāra, and possibly Tokharistan, that is to say, the whole of north and north-west India, or some district within it."[225] Therefore, it is quite possible that the Vorlage of a text in Gāndhārī could have been brought from Jibin, and there is no particular need to bring Khotan into the picture. Moreover, there are other reasons for questioning the reliability of the Preface, on which see note 110, above. In any case, whether Buddhayaśas was from Khotan, Kashmir, Gandhāra or Tokharistan, he is equally unlikely to have been educated in Chinese in any of those lands, and it is much safer and more reasonable for us to assume his ignorance of that language than the contrary.

Additional Note 3
(to n. 125)

The examples cited in the main text are far from the only cases of the term *shēn-shèlì* that may be located even in relatively early Chinese translations. For instance, in the anonymous but probably late fourth century rendering of the *Karuṇapuṇḍarīka* we find several examples, which may be correlated with the extant Sanskrit text. The exact sense of the term, however, is not always clear, and more research is needed. For the time being, we may simply cite the following cases:[226]

[223] This has been highlighted by Forte 1990: 243; see also Unebe 1970: 27-28.

[224] Nishimura 1992, referring to T. 1428 (XXII) 567ab.

[225] Enomoto 1994: 361; the last clause is added to the offprint by the hand of the author.

[226] (a) T. 158 (III) 263c12-14 (*juan* 4) = Yamada 1968: 213.10-13; (b) T. 158 (III) 270a1-3 (*juan* 5) = Yamada 1968: 262.6-9; (c) T. 158 (III) 276b8-9 (*juan* 6) = Yamada 1968: 313.16-18.

(a)
我正法滅賢劫盡已、當令我齒及身舍利、變成無量阿僧祇化佛、具足三十二大人之相以莊嚴身。

niṣṭhite mama saddharme niṣṭhite bhadrakalpe ye mama dhātavo janmaśarīraḥ te 'prameyāsaṁkhyeyās tathāgatavigrahāḥ saṁtiṣṭheran.

(b)
乃至以誓力、我當五分壽減一。欲般涅槃時、我當碎身舍利如半芥子、爲悲衆生故、然後當入涅槃。

yāvan samādhānabalenāhaṁ pañcamabhāgam āyuḥsaṁskārāṇām avasṛjeyaṁ parinirvāṇakālasamaye cāhaṁ svayam eva svaśarīrasarṣapaphalapramāṇamātraṁ bhindeyaṁ[227] sattvānāṁ kāruṇyārthe cāhaṁ paścāt parinirvāpayeyam.

(c)
正法滅後、善丈夫、汝色身舍利亦如是作佛事如汝願

saddharme cāntarhite tava satpuruṣa te 'pi dhātavaḥ janmaśarīre evaṁrūpaṁ buddhakāryaṁ kariṣyanti yathā svayaṁ praṇidhānaṁ kṛtam ...

Additional Note 4
(to n. 153)

At least one colleague has suggested to me that we see in the term *suìshēn-shèlì* an equivalent to Indic *śarīra-vaistārika*. I do not think this is correct. In the first place, it is difficult to cite any example of *suìshēn-shèlì* in any text for which we have an extant Indic version. Second, I doubt the existence of such an Indic compound as **śarīra-vaistārika* in the first place.

Although the expression *suìshēn* is not rare, the compound *suìshēn-shèlì* is much less common. Moreover, even in such examples as can be located, it is frequently the case that *suì* is to be taken as a verb (as in §§ **33**, **35**, Additional Note 3 [b], and compare § **45**), and therefore the sequence *suìshēn-shèlì* should not be understood as a compound at all. Other examples may be cited, such as the following from the *Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā*:[228]

[227] Note here that the Chinese text's *suì* 碎 in the sequence *suì shēn shèlì* 碎身舍利 must be a verb, and not the prior member of a compound **suìshēn* 碎身. This is indicated both by the modal *dāng* 當, and by the corresponding Sanskrit text's *bhindeyam*.

佛亦如是。入涅槃時、爲濟衆生故、碎身舍利、八斛四斗。利益衆生。所碎舍利、雖復微小如芥子等、所至之處人所供養與佛無異。能使衆生得於涅槃。

Buddhas are also like this. When they enter nirvāṇa, in order to save sentient beings they pulverize their body into relics (*suì shēn-shèlì*), (creating relics in the amount of) eight *droṇas and four *āḍhakas,[229] to benefit beings. Although the pulverized relics are as minute as mustard seeds, wherever they reach people worship them no differently than if they were the Buddha [himself]. Thus they enable sentient beings to attain nirvāṇa.

Similar in intent is a passage from the *Ekottarikāgama*. Considering how Buddhas of the past did not establish long-lasting legacies, Śākyamuni considers how he might do so:[230]

如來身者金剛之數。意欲碎此身、如芥子許、流布世間。使將來之世、信樂檀越不見如來形像者、取供養之因。緣是福祐當生~

The Tathāgata's body belongs to the "vajra" class. I want to pulverize (*suì*) this body (*shēn*) into pieces as small as mustard seeds, and dispurse them throughout the world. In future ages devout donors who do not see an image of the Tathāgata will make offerings to them, and from the merit this produces gain birth [—in various excellent states, which are enumerated].

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[228] T. 201 (IV) 347c17-21 (*juan* 15). Huber 1908: 460-461 has the following: "... de même le Buddha, après être entré dans le Nirvâṇa pour sauver les êtres, pour donner des avantages aux êtres, fit broyer ses reliques, qui remplissaient quatre boisseaux et qui furent divisées en huit parties. Ces reliques broyées, bien qu'elle soient petites comme des grains de moutarde, sont honorées comme le Buddha lui-même partout où elles arrivent. Elles ont la capacité d'éveiller l'aspiration des êtres vers le Nirvâṇa."

[229] Although not a very well known story, occuring as far as I can tell in only a few relatively obscure sources, the reference is to the legendary amount of relics left by the Buddha. According to one account (a somewhat unusual note called *Fo banniehuanhou bianji* 佛般泥洹後變記, attached to the *Fomu banniehuan jing* 佛母般泥洹經 T. 145 [II] 870c1-2, translated by Huijian 慧簡 in the late fifth century), "King Aśoka requested the eight *droṇas and four *āḍhakas of relics from the eight kings [to whom they had been distributed after the cremation], and in a single day erected 84,000 stūpas." An early sixth century Lotus sūtra commentary (*Fahuajing yiji* 法華經義記 T. 1715 [XXXIII] 671a11-12 by Fayun 法雲) also refers to the same amount of relics, but without reference to any story about Aśoka.

I should stress that I am not at all confident that the Sanskrit equivalents I offer genuineely represent some real Indic terminology in this case. That the relics were divided into eight and each placed in a container called *droṇa* is, however, well known from multiple sources. Additionally confusing is that, according to Sircar (1965: 413), as a measure four *āḍhaka*s are equivalent to one *droṇa*. Further consideration is required.

[230] T. 125 (II) 751a11-14 (*juan* 36); cp. the translation in Bareau 1987: 22.

When *suìshēn-shèlì* does occur as a clear compound, its sense seems to be "relics of a pulverized body." For example, we find in the so-called Southern *Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* the following discussion:[231]

若受化身、云何得有碎身舍利。如來爲益衆生福德故、碎其身而令供養。是故如來不受化身。

If [the Buddha] were to have a body [born of] spontaneous generation [**aupapāduka*], how could there be *suìshēn-shèlì*? Because the Tathāgata works to increase the merit of beings, he pulverizes (*suì*) his body so that [beings] may worship it. Therefore the Tathāgata is not born with a body of spontaneous generation.

Now, what of **śarīra-vaistārika*? Peter Skilling has recently suggested a contrast between multiple fragmentary relics and a single solid relic.[232] He identifies the former with the Sanskrit "technical term" *vaistārika*, the latter with *ekaghana*. Skilling's second formulation of the meaning of the former term is better: *vaistārika* means extensive or widespread. In this regard, he refers to a number of Pāli commentaries which state that long-lived Buddhas leave only single relics, while short-lived ones (such as Śākyamuni) dispurse multiple relics in many stūpas. According to Skilling, a distinction between *ekaghana* and *vaistārika* relics is found in the *Bhadrakalpika-sūtra*'s newly discovered second-third century Gāndhārī fragments.

No published text of the Indic language *Bhadrakalpika-sūtra* is yet available, so it is not possible to comment on this usage. But Skilling also refers for the same idea to the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*. Here, however, I disagree with him when he sees in this text a compound term *śarīra-vaistārika* (apparently with a technical meaning).[233] In the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* there are three clear appearances of the term *vaistārika* in relevant contexts, and these make it clear that it

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[231] T. 375 (XII) 806a5-8 (*juan* 30). It is very interesting that a closely parallel discussion is found in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, in which we read (Pradhan 1975: 119.24-25): *apare tv āhu | śarīradhātunām avasthāpanārthaṁ yeṣu manuṣyā anye ca pūjāṁ vidhāya* (so read for *prajāṁ vijñāya*) *sahasraḥ svargaṁ ca prāptā apavargaṁ ceti*, "Others say: [a Buddha does not take birth by spontaneous generation] in order to solidify his bodily relics, through which by the thousands humans and others who do worship [to them] will obtain heaven and liberation." Vasubandhu rejects this reasoning. See La Vallée Poussin 1923-1931: iii.30-31, and Skilling 2005: 296, to which I owe the reference.

[232] Skilling 2005: 294ff.

[233] Skilling 2005: 300; see, however, his Appendix V, pp. 318-319, in which he has taken note of other passages in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, as well as others noted by Edgerton 1953, s.v. vaistārika, on which see the following.

is to be understood as descriptive of the distribution of the relics, not as an adjectival specification of their nature. Indeed, this understanding was already stated unambiguously by Edgerton.[234] The expression *śarīra vaistārika* occurs in two verses:[235]

> śarīra vaistārika tasya cābhūt, 分布諸舍利
> śarīra vaistārika tasya tāyinaḥ, 舍利廣流布

In both these cases, the meaning is that the relics are distributed. There is no description here of the type or character of the relics themselves. A further, similar passage appears in prose: [236]

> parinirvāṇasya ca me kulaputra ye dhātavas tān anuparindāmi | ātmanā ca tvayā kulaputra mama dhātūnāṁ vipulā pūjā kartavyā vaistārikāś ca te dhātavaḥ kartavyāḥ stūpanāṁ ca bahūni sahsrāṇi kartavyāni |
>
> After my death, gentle son, I will present [my] relics [to you], and you yourself, gentle son, are to cause those relics to be worshipped broadly, and cause those relics to be spread widely, and many thousands of stūpas constructed for them.

There are additional examples of the same vocabulary in the *Divyāvadāna* (*Aśokāvadāna*), where the same Sanskrit expression recurrs, with slightly different Chinese equivalents:[237] *śarīradhātūn vaistārikān kariṣyati* = *fēn wǒ shèlì* 分我舍利 and *guǎngfēn shèlì* 廣分舍利. We may note an additional example from the same text,[238] referring to the distribution of stūpas with the words: *vaistārikā dhātudharāḥ kṛtāś ca*. Here it is not a question of any qualification of the relics, but rather of the distribution of the monuments which enshrine them.[239]

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[234] Edgerton 1953, s.v. vaistārika.

[235] Kern and Nanjio 1908-1912: 26.8 (1.84a) = Toda 1997: 10. Substantially the same in Gilgit Watanabe 1975: 18.2. Kashgar however reads (Toda 1983: 17 = 34a1) *śarīra vaistārika tasya āsi*. Kumārajīva's Chinese at T. 262 (IX) 5a22(*juan* 1).

The second verse is at Kern and Nanjio 1908-1912: 69.2 (3.31c) = Toda 1988: 61, Watanabe 1975: 208.4. Again Kashgar (Toda 1983: 38 = 73b2) is slightly different, *śarīra vaistārika tasya bhonti*. Chinese at T. 262 (IX) 12a3 (*juan* 2).

[236] Kern and Nanjio 1908-1912: 410.12-411.3, Watanabe 1975: 163.23-26 (with *dhātustūpānāṁ vipulā* for *dhātūnāṁ vipulā*): Kumārajīva's Chinese at T. 262 (IX) 53c14-15 (*juan* 6) reads: 我滅度後、所有舍利、亦付囑汝、當令流布廣設供養、應起若干千塔.

[237] Cowell and Neil 1886: 368.27-28 = 379.21-22 = T. 2042 (L) 99c8 (*juan* 1), 101c23-24 (*juan* 1).

[238] Cowell and Neil 1886: 388.4, recognized as a verse (Indravajrā) by Mukhopadhyaya 1963: 79.

The question of the meaning of *suìshēn-shèlì* appears, then, to be unrelated to the question of *vaistārika śarīra*, the former referring to some condition of the relics, namely their being the result of the pulverization of a body, while the Sanskrit term refers to the distribution of relics in the world. The former, moreover, is never attested as a translation of the latter.

Additional Note 5

(to n. 174)

Regarding the word *vigraha* in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, Tsukamoto takes it as something like "division," *bunri* 分離, *bunkatsu* 分割,[240] translating *ātmabhāvavigraha* as *bunkatsu sareta shintai* 分割された身体, "divided body." I think this can hardly be right. In fact, *vigraha* as "body" appears to me to be perfectly ordinary Sanskrit.[241] An example of *śarīra* and *vigraha* together is provided by the *Mahābhārata*: *tathā divyaśarīrās te na ca vigrahamūrtyaḥ*,"Their [= Ṛbhus'] bodies are divine, but not corporeal."[242] My translation of the compound *ātmabhāva-vigraha* as "body-frame" is nothing more than a mechanical calque of the compound which, I believe, is actually best considered simply to mean

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[239] That the word *dhātudhara* means "stūpa" is virtually certain. While not all occurences of the term in texts or inscriptions are sure (see Schopen 1988 n. 40, who citing a number of examples points out that the reading may in some cases rather be the grahically very similar **dhātuvara*), there are other cases where it is quite certain. One may refer to a passage in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*. There we find the following verse (Kern and Nanjio 1908-1912: 52.9-10 [2.96] ≈ Gilgit [Watanabe 1975: 195.9-12]):

> namo 'stu buddhāya kṛtaikavārā yehī tadā dhātudhareṣu teṣu |
> vikṣiptacittair api ekavārā te sarvi prāptā imam agrabodhim ||

To this corresponds in the Kashgar manuscript the following (Toda 1983: 60a1-2):

> namo 'stu buddhāya kṛtaikavācā yebhis tahi(ṁ) dhātudhareṣu teṣu |
> vikṣiptacittāḥ kari ekavācā(ṁ) te cāpi prāptā imam agrabodhiṁm ||

The Chinese translations by Kumārajīva and Dharmarakṣa respectively have the following (T. 262 [IX] 9a24-25 [*juan* 1]):

> 若人散亂心　入於塔廟中　一稱南無佛　皆已成佛道

And (T. 263 [IX] 71c12-15 [*juan* 1]):

> 假使有持　舍利供養　口宣音言　南摸佛尊
> 其亂心者　若說此言　斯等皆當　逮尊佛道

Although there is much to discuss in this verse (and see Karashima 1992: 57 for some remarks), what is quite clear is that *dhātudhara* here refers to a stūpa.

[240] Tsukamoto 1976: 51-52.

[241] See Böhtlingk and Roth 1855–1875: VI.1003 (s.v. vigraha 6), "individuelle Forme,—Gestalt; Leib, Körper."

[242] *Mahābhārata* 3.247.21cd; the translation is that of van Buitnen 1975: 704.

"body."

We may note another interesting and no doubt somehow related word again found in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, namely *dhātuvigraha*, which occurs in the following passage:[243]

> vayam api bhagavaṁs tasya prabhūtaratnasya tathāgatasyārhataḥ samyaksaṁbuddhasya dhātuvigrahaṁ paśyema | tat sādhu bhagavān darśayatu tathāgatas tasya bhagavataḥ prabhūtaratnasya tathāgatasyārhataḥ samyaksaṁbuddhasya dhātuvigraham iti |

> We too, Blessed One, would see the body (*dhātuvigraha*) of the Tathāgata, Arhat Complete and Perfect Buddha Prabhūtaratna. Would the Blessed One thus please display the body of the Tathāgata, Arhat Complete and Perfect Buddha Prabhūtaratna.

To this corresponds the following in Dharmarakṣa's translation:[244]

> 我等故來。欲得睹見衆寶如來形像所類。願佛現之。

One line later we also find the expression *yùjiàn shìzūn shèntǐxíngxiàng* 欲見世尊聖體形像. Since the Buddha in question, Prabhūtaratna, is in some sense dead (qualified both before and after the cited sentence as *parinirvṛta*), and yet not dead (since he speaks, for instance), what the bodhisattva Gadgadasvara (the "we" of the text) wishes to see is, in some way, both a body and bodily relics. It is not easy to know how to refer to such an object of visual perception, but what should be clear is that here, as I believe also elsewhere, *vigraha* has as its most direct sense "body."

243 Kern and Nanjio 1908-1912 430.5-8. Probably corresponding to a sentence several lines later are several Central Asian manuscripts (Toda 1983: 415a4, as well as the fragment on 294, XXIV fol. 157 v.2) which also contain the word *dhātuvigraha*; see also Karashima 1992: 226.

244 T. 263 (IX) 128a5-6 (*juan* 9). See Karashima 1998: 507, s.v. xíng xiàng, who renders this term "an image."

Additional Note 6
(to n. 209)

Inscriptional evidence for the grammatical number of the word *śarīra* is, as is so often the case with inscriptions, frequently ambiguous. In the first place, the word itself is not terribly common, probably because reliquary inscriptions themselves are not so very common. Among the known examples, there is no question that a grammatically plural interpretation is more common than that as grammatically singular.

The interpretation is often ambiguous since *śarīra* very frequently occurs as an endingless stem form, that is, as *śarira* as such.[245] A fair number of times, however, this stem form is clearly to be understood as plural, since it is preceded by the pronoun *ime*,[246] and in at least one instance no ambiguity as to number at all is possible, although the case is not entirely clear.[247] Nevertheless, even here things are not always clear. In one reliquary inscription, for instance, we find the sequence *ime śarīra*, understood as plural, but as the editor points out, "these relics" are associated with three verbs, all of which are in the singular.[248]

There are, however, also at least two inscriptional examples of *śarīra* in the sense of "relic" which either clearly are, or at the very least appear to be, morphologically singular, one as *śariraṁ*,[249] a singular accusative, the other a singular instumental.[250]

245 In such cases there may simply be no way to know the intended grammatical number, as in the duplicate silver and gold inscriptions edited by Salomon 1996, and a number of cases in Konow 1929: 48 (§XV A 11), 152 (§ LXXIX), 155 (§ LXXX 2), 158 (§ LXXXII 1, 2), 170 (§ LXXXVI 1). Note that this can also be the case when the technical term in question is the much less common *dhātu*, rather than *śarīra*, as for instance in Sadakata 1996: 309, and perhaps Salomon 1995b: 136.

246 See the reliquaries of Indravarman (lines 4a, 1a) and Ramaka (2b) in Fussman 1980: 4-5 (and on the overall interpretation of the former, the additional remarks of Salomon and Schopen 1984); Traṣaka reliquary, l. 4 (Fussman 1985b: 37); reliquary of the year 26, l. 13 (Fussman 1985c: 48); the reliquary studied by Salomon 1995a; reliquary of Prahodi (Sadakata 1996: 303); the Trami reliquary (Majumdar 1942: 10); Swat relic vase (Konow 1929: 4 §I).

247 In the Bīmarān vase we find *śarirehi* (Konow 1929: 52, § XVII), which however may be either instrumental, or perhaps dative, in Konow's view. Either way, it is obviously plural.

248 The Bajaur reliquary, in Fussman 1993: 106 (the inscription as a whole is treated on pp. 95-110). Tsukamoto 1996: 999 takes *ime* as singular, but see Konow 1929: 3.

249 In the Patika copper plate l. 3, Konow 1929: 28. The parallelism between the inscription's *apratiṭhavita bhagavata śakamuṇisa śariraṁ* [*pra*]*tithaveti* and scriptural expressions was noticed by Schopen 1977: 143.

250 In the reliquary of Śatrea published by Fussman 1985a: 30, in l. 2 we have *imaṇa ca śarirraṇa*, understood (p. 33) as **im(e)ṇa ca śarir(e)ṇa*, singular instrumental.

Now, a further suggestive but, if possible, even more obscure case comes with the very first written example of the word *śarīra* in India. In the Ahraurā version of the Aśoka's First Minor Rock Edict, the last line contains the words *budhasa salīle āloḍhe*. It is quite sure both that *salīle* here is a neuter nominative singular, and that the reference is to the *salīla* of the Buddha.[251] Unfortunately the word (if it is indeed a word) preceding this expression, and the sense of what is clearly the verb *āloḍhe*, remain obscure. K. R. Norman has argued that the singular grammatical form here compels us to understand *salīle* as referring to a body. While I think that this is probably not so, the example is so fraught with difficulties that almost nothing certain can be said at all about it, much less far reaching conclusions drawn on its basis.[252]

[251] For the inscription, perhaps the best edition is that in Andersen 1990: 16-19, and see Norman 1983, which contains reference to previous discussions.

[252] A detailed discussion, earlier than and reaching conclusions quite at variance with that of Norman, is Sircar 1979: 72-82.

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